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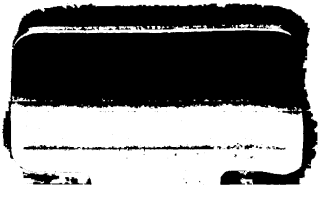

# PATRIOTISM AND SCIENCE

# PATRIOTISM AND SCIENCE

## Some Studies

IN

## HISTORIC PSYCHOLOGY

BY

WILLIAM MORTON FULLERTON

AUTHOR OF "IN CAIRO"

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University Press:
JOHN WILSON AND SON, CAMBRIDGE, U.S.A.

## To my Father,

*On whose library-shelves the sight of Plato touching shoulders with John Howe the Puritan preacher, and of the poet Shelley enduring with unwonted tranquillity his two odd companions on either hand, Balzac and the author of the "Divine Legation of Moses," while just beyond stood Lucretius, the "Thousand and One Nights," and Adam Smith, suggested to me, the boy, the value of the social virtue of tolerance, and, although it impressed at first the special charm of literature, suggested without much ado the larger interest of life.*

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# NOTICE.

Two of the following essays appeared originally in the *Fortnightly Review*. They have since been revised, and are now published together under the title "English and 'Americans.'" The other attempts at appreciation of the Time have not before been printed. The dates affixed to the two former are those of publication.

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# ON A CERTAIN DANGER IN PATRIOTISM AT THE PRESENT TIME.

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# PATRIOTISM AND SCIENCE.

## ON A CERTAIN DANGER IN PATRIOTISM AT THE PRESENT TIME.

THE word is by way of being pedantic, but how little can one help wishing at times for a whole planet of "philosophers;" for although "philosophy can bake no bread," and although there may be much doubt whether it can "give us God, Freedom, and Immortality," yet unquestionably, without that impulse to comparing one thing with another which results in a kind of liking for the condition of detachment from each special fact known to us,—a state usually reached by a widely awakened man in the world, and one which deserves to be known as philosophic, —there is the risk that we all, rendered clannish by our confinement within particular geographical barriers, or limited, perchance, by kinship of race, may lose positive insights of value in regard to other respectable, even interesting, sections of our human fellows, not to speak of the loss of those superior

pleasures that attend this "philosophic" detached condition, the somewhat general, the so-called cosmopolitan, or even the cosmical, way of looking at things.

Thus, for instance, a number of those especially English qualities, so mixed of unlike elements as almost to demand a suicidal phrase in description of them, such a phrase, perhaps, as *odious merits*, — all those qualities, I mean, which have been frequently so very obtrusive in the contact of the English people with others in the recent eight hundred years, over seas as well as in the English island, become, by reason of the coagulating clannish drift in human nature, unfortunately contrasted with what, in the same general way, I may be allowed to call the amiable defects of the French; for by qualities permitting such euphemistic description the French have usually been known to the great practical, unimaginative "Saxon" world.

The result of the contrast between the *amiable defects* and the *odious merits* has been a long story of mutual misunderstanding. To disinterested critics of the two peoples this misunderstanding is almost pathetic, and to the gods — of whom, surely, a spirit of poetic justice still demands our pious recognition — it must be ironic. An approximately disinterested observer, — for this is all that any one of us can hope to be, — seeking to avoid, with equal caution, unscientific laudation and unscientific depreciation of both

planet, and even become so chronic that there will seem to be positively no cure.

I chanced not long ago upon an article in the *Contemporary Review*,[1] by a Mr. Edward Wakefield, on so enticing a theme that I promptly bought the number and read the article, — "The Brand of Cain in the Great Republic;" and I read it, if not with pleasure, at least with entertainment. It came to me, at the time, as so happy an instance of the sort of thing which may be called internationally unfortunate, the fact that not all men can claim pretensions in a way to being "philosophers," wisdom-loving, — to liking, I mean, to find out the truth for its own sake, irrespective of the consequences, in an honest, scientific fashion. For this article was one of those plausible but unsatisfactory things which we all of us are sure to produce if we have not the leaven of criticism to temper the utterances made by us in that needlessly average state of ignorance of others that so surely results in uncompromising patriotism. But patriotism is so little laudable in itself that it appears to me to be positively vulgarizing and repressing if it be treasured at the expense of the critical wider view, or, as M. le Vicomte de Vogüé says, the "passion for the planet," — a passion which reveals many relatively admirable things everywhere about us, even among other peoples

[1] November, 1891.

than our own, and shows us that the humanized temper named cosmopolitism — I wish there were an exacter word — brings its reward as well as the Anglo-Hebraic thing called patriotism. So that when this Mr. Wakefield, in the not unnatural way of the English of the island, — although he wrote entertainingly and admirably to the point, as a lawyer preparing a brief, — recorded in quick succession instance after instance of American love for the "smell of blood" (he found this phrase in a poem of the late Mr. Lowell, and made effective use of it), I, although I listened, could not help immediately putting him down on the list of those admirable patriotic writers who clearly deserve pensions and button-hole ribbons from their states, but who cannot be classed among the critics of the finer breed, whose country's boundaries, not for practical social purposes, but for the responsible exactions of authorship, is somewhat wider than that, at least, of their native state. For here is what Mr. Wakefield wrote: —

"The Americans take a most curious view of this kind of killing. [He refers to homicides.] They consider [*sic*] that any man may rightly shoot another from whom he thinks himself in danger of a blow or any hurt, or even from whom he has had bad words."

Then again: —

"In all ranks of society, even in New York and Philadelphia, men are to be met with who have taken life, who

are not ashamed of themselves for it, and whose friends are not ashamed of them either."

And once more: —

"Boys, and even women, quite commonly take the life of a fellow-creature in the United States, and if 'provocation' or any strong emotion can be shown, it is thought rather creditable to them than otherwise."

*Quite commonly*, and *rather creditable to them than otherwise!* And Mr. Wakefield uses the word "Americans," which is inclusive. But still one more quotation: —

"It will doubtless shock and surprise worthy people in England, who do not know much about America, to hear that burning alive is practised in that free and enlightened country a century after it has been abandoned in Spain and Italy."

Really, in the face of so terrible an indictment, and if the "Americans" be so hopelessly, reekingly red-handed as all this, what can we all be but pessimists in regard to democracy, pessimists of the darkest shade? Where is there for us any hope? And if what Mr. Wakefield says be true, the title of his article, so successfully reproducing the inimitable characteristics of the headlines of the journals of this detestable United States of North America, deserves for its achievements in what is frequently known as "local colour," considerable praise. But, seriously, imagine

the late Walter Bagehot, or M. Boutmy to-day in France, writing like this! Imagine these gentlemen pointing out a number of lamentable facts in regard to life in the United States of North America, and then making of such facts so little critical use as to set down in responsible but corrupting black type on virginal white paper the unqualified assertions about "boys, and even women," who "quite commonly" indulge in the extremely unsociable acts named, and about the "practice" of "burning alive" rivalling in its painful features the supposed customs of Spain and Italy a century ago. Imagine them collecting these instances, and not arranging such instances in their proper places, in that correct perspective so dear to the scientist; not, for example, — to name but one kind of obvious reservation, — assuring their readers that while every one of the odious events recorded could often be paralleled in this land of individual assertion, — the sort of thing, says Mr. Wakefield, that the Americans like in women, and dub an "excitable temperament," — the only possible light in which his discussion can be seen to be of any value is had when a comparison is drawn between, on the one side, the habits of these enormously-diffused and red-handed people of the United States of North America, and, on the other, the conduct of the peoples of the United Kingdom (and it is unfortunate for him that this name includes the

Ireland of the last ten years), of the whole of Europe, and even of a part of Asia as well. For the community of the United States of North America is a very varied one; it is scattered over what the majority of its members are always apt to assert loudly is the greatest country in the world, and it is moreover a collection of almost autonomous states, somewhat similar, in this respect of decentralization, to the political relations of the people of Greek cantons in their brief periods of confederation, — a fact of which, however, I would not do Mr. Wakefield the injustice to deny that he is aware. But in failing to point out this much of the whole and real bearing of his unimpeachable facts, and therefore of others like them, Mr. Wakefield's entertaining article became comparatively valueless, without useful point. I have paid to it almost unfair attention. I cite these passages only as an illustration of the unsatisfactory results we are all apt to produce if we write as patriots rather than as critics, and of the loss of positive insights that we suffer if we come at relative things like ourselves and our neighbours in so uncritical a mood.

So again, indeed, may the same thing be seen in the relations of us Scotch and English, wherever we may have been born, with the not very colonizing French. The English, with their one great idea, their love for institutions, a love however which is no

passion, but with their dogged grip of this, and with their practical honesty, and their extraordinary energy, cannot be expected in general to see great virtue in a people who, like the French, really think spontaneously, and who think so much that their thinking would seem to have tended to stunt the race physically, the energy being devoted to the elaboration of the folded gray matter in the brain rather than to the rounding of muscles and the reddening of cheeks; and when these French people not only think, but often put their thinking violently, indecorously into action, how can the English be blamed for having their peculiar opinion in regard to French lack of self-control, and French childishness and caprice? Blamed for inevitable opinions? Human nature, at the hands of the critic, at least, never need suffer this injustice. But when it is remembered that what is censured thus in the opinion of Englishmen are the frequently intolerable results arising from the possession by Frenchmen of certain things of which Englishmen have so little, but without which undoubtedly, however, one must admit that they have got on extremely well, the censure, while intelligible, may be appreciated at its worth. The censure receives its proper interpretation as a failure to understand, whereas corresponding censure of Englishmen by Frenchmen has almost always tended to be more critical. It has usually been this

English failure to understand which has created the antipathy that England has felt with reference to France. But ignorant sneer on the one side has been met on the other by supercilious disdain. It is conceivable that some one might argue that the antipathy is rather an international hostility of peoples that have often met perforce of geographical accidents on the field of battle; that the English, for instance, never can forget that once upon a time their Edward III. was repulsed before the clock-towers of Chartres in the green meadows of the Beauce, and the French that the *beau pays* was cut and desolated by the horse-hoofs of the English Plantagenets; France that she lost an empire in America and in India, and that to-day the valley of the Nile, whose unspeakable charm French men, more than any other men, have rendered intelligible and seductive throughout the world, is becoming only one more play-ground for a mastering race who love, better than the tombs of Ti, the fine game of polo, and who dress in scarlet uniforms within sight of the abashed eyelids of the Sphinx. All this has its force undoubtedly. But even these notable achievements of English energy are not the things that have done the most to cleave the gulf: the English recall them only as one more evidence of their divine right as the chosen people, and of the clear proof of French inferiority; the French remember

them as proof that in all the assumption of comparison in regard to physical prowess and the great tenacious virtues perhaps the English are right; but they half learn the lesson — and this is a great merit — that their own distinction, which is of quite another order, should not be lightly esteemed. The antipathy that exists is, I repeat, the duel of uncomprehending sneer and of supercilious disdain. And what the French in their more analysing, critical way lay up against the English, and find infinite difficulty in forgetting, are incidents of a very different sort.

Now, all this crude, uncritical feeling is surely a great mistake. It certainly stands full in the way of one of the things for which we all ought to strive, — a completer knowledge of what other men have done everywhere in the world, without distinction of blood or home; and the cultivating of a loud-mouthed patriotism, for its own sake as an end, would seem to retard the comity between the nations which certainly might bring us now other incalculable advantages perhaps quite as good as those that, as we are told, patriotism alone can offer us.

I have said "might bring us." But I should very much regret giving an impression that I am unaware of what a great virtue patriotism has been in the world, and still is. When one thinks of Greece, when one thinks of Rome, when one thinks of Israel, when

one thinks of New England, what first comes to the mind of us all, — no, what first comes to the mind even especially of the average among us who are not scholars, and do not know these places in all the incomplete detail of their history, — if it is not the compactness of these peoples, their aggressiveness, their unity, their national consciousness, their common pride, and their devotion to the often narrow but always definite and tangible ideals of their own national temperament, — in a word, their patriotism? And in contrast to all this, what I will not ask is the common opinion held of men who have betrayed their countries, but what do the professional historians insist on telling us about these very same peoples when these writers enter curiously into an analysis of the causes of their disintegration or their fall, if at the most all that they say may not be summed up in the assertion that when matters became so shockingly bad it was because the old feeling of patriotism no longer stirred men's minds as in the periods of "glorious unity" and livelier self-consciousness? But while patriotism seems to have been hitherto a name for the great unifying impulse that made peoples, although not necessarily amiable, yet strong; and although the absence of it may now and then be a positive social crime, like treason, or regicide, or what you will of the same sort, it is conceivable that at other times and in quite

other conditions its virtue may not appear so obvious, but may even positively evaporate. For patriotism has up to our century served its place in history not, surely everybody will admit, as a necessarily demonstrable good in itself, but as a good only because it served other ends which for men, at each time when it has been so rife, were clearly demonstrable goods, if they themselves were to live at all in any sort of ordered way. But suppose that a time arrive in which the end sought to be obtained by the cultivation of the mood and the duty of patriotism is no longer so important as before; when not merely it is no longer necessary that men should be kept asunder for their own collective or individual good, but also indeed very important that they should, on the other hand, be brought quickly closer and closer together, in order that they may not be slow in accepting and appreciating the multitudinous hints and suggestions of a great fresh mechanical century like our own, with railroads and telegraphs and all that,— then surely something of the glory that hangs about the word patriotism would begin to fade. Can one not imagine even the possibility of "cosmopolitism" exciting in these circumstances an equally virtuous passion? Is it even positively irreligious to conceive an era of international comity when the epitaph, "He died for his country," may arouse in the mind of the spectator

rather a thought of pity for the poor fellow permitted thus by his rather barbaric, rather uncritical neighbours to be a victim of such an absurd necessity, than of unmixed admiration for any inimitable heroism enshrined in the phrase?

Well, it appears to me that into such a time as this men are now entering, though we ourselves are pretty certain not to see it; but at all events patriotism is not at all the thing it was. And while for a good, or bad, time longer some of men's highest devotions will still cling to this ideal, there is the sign of the change. Yet the lack of prejudice and the unwillingness to censure such hitherto odious proverbs as *Ubi bene, ibi patria*, and the utter disappearance of those sectional and national prejudices that made Béranger once so absorbing, and Jacob's Ode on Privilege so magnificent, so picturesque, and makes to-day some of our patriotic verse so unpoetical, like the loud cracking in the wind of a stiffly starched national flag,— while these various dreams, I say, remain still unfulfilled, and as they are sure to remain unfulfilled so long, there can be no danger even of a little exaggeration in one's utterance as to the merits of even other peoples than one's own. Proper criticism can thereby only be helped, and we shall certainly be sure of not in any way retarding the stream of tendency.

It is the more needful, moreover, that this or that

one of us who finds himself at liberty to speak should not resist the interpretation of the time, that the very things which are making such inroads on patriotism, — namely, all those forces which are magically reducing the earth's circumference, — will undoubtedly, still for some time longer, have locally quite the opposite effect, and will make men think more about the things within their own most limited horizon even than they did before. For it is these very forces which are now drawing together the inquisitive world, and which will eventually draw together the whole world, that are waking up men, and suggesting to them new problems, and worrying them terribly to-day with apparently all but insoluble questions. This is why, whether we like it or dislike it, or whether we ought to like it or dislike it, patriotism will still have its ample field, and may reap its legitimate glorious rewards.

Take such an event as happened the other day in France in connection with the question always so important there of the relations between church and state, when an archbishop, a certain Monseigneur Gouthe-Soulard, refused to accept loyally the republican *régime*, and in very irresponsible ways lent the force of his great parochial authority to strengthening the various local elements of resistance and obstruction, one might almost say of sedition, against the whole idea of the present republican government.

The incident was really so interesting that I think it important to refer to it at some length; it happened in this fashion.

Every one knows how the power of the Pope in temporal things has been, for the moment, curtailed throughout the world; how in Rome, the city of the Holy Father, if it be remembered how glorious that condition once was, his condition may really, after all, be said to be to-day what the faithful are always asserting it to be,—almost that of a prisoner in a palace; and every one can understand how the loyal host of the clergy, "vicars of Christ," often chafe against this state of things, and regard it as something to be changed at any cost. So it is not incomprehensible that much activity should be expended in recovering the former majesty and dominance, and, to those who know France, that special energy of this kind should emanate from there. For just as in China at the present moment all Chinese gentlemen of good birth are unable to conceive how they can be at once Chinamen and Christians, missionaries and all that being to them only the advance guard of the European civilization which undermines their own, so that it appears to them complete disloyalty, absolute anti-patriotism in a purely political sense, to accept the strenuous notions of the foreigner,—so in France, now for many years, to be a republican, to accept the

republican *régime*, has been to many really like an abjuration before men of Christianity itself; has been almost, indeed, to proclaim oneself an atheist. And it was the monarchy, and only the monarchy, which, it has been widely imagined, cared for religion, and in particular cared for the Roman Catholic Church. It is not necessary now to consider why such a notion arose, or whether it was well or ill founded. I need point out only that it was very rife, and still is very rife,[1] notwithstanding in many respects its manifest injustice and inaccuracy, and the significant efforts of men like Cardinal Lavigerie, the Bishop of Annecy, and indeed even the great head of the Church himself, in his general attitude of disapproval of warlike rebellious methods, to stem the torrent. So with so widespread a feeling in the country it is not surprising that Roman Catholic Christians, a little hot-

[1] Since these lines were written, indeed only within the last few weeks, there has been a great change. The Pope, Leo XIII., has spoken in clear, irritating accents; he has recognized the Republic; the Comte de Mun, former leader in the Chamber of the "Royalist right," has abandoned his old position; and all along the line there is hesitation and dismay. For France 1892 is the most memorable year since the war. It has seen the alliance of Russia with that country, and the Pope's irrevocable decision to accept the present *régime* as established. France, notwithstanding the scandal of Panama, holds in the world a position of dignity to-day more admirable than at any other time in its history.

headed, and owing allegiance first to their faith, should conceive such a scheme as was conceived in France. Pilgrimages, called pilgrimages of French workmen, were arranged, and some twenty thousand of these "workmen" were despatched to Rome with the avowed object of offering to the Holy Father a solid proof of the undiminished loyalty of France to the Holy See. Wise men, thinking of the strained relations of France and Italy in these days of the renewed Triple Alliance; thinking of the friction between Italy and the Vatican; and thinking of the multitude of latent possibilities of something, of many things, going wrong, when twenty thousand foreigners were suddenly precipitated in such circumstances into a foreign capital,— were greatly troubled at the prospect. But the Government, though it had the chance of wise action, and was as alive as possible to the danger, in reality said nothing, did nothing. It overlooked, with a leniency that testified to its real dread in the whole matter, rather than to a firm tactfulness, several violations of the Concordat of Napoleon,— such, for instance, as M. Gouthe-Soulard's going at all to Rome without seeking the permission of the Minister of Public Worship, — and it awaited the issue.

The issue came, not as big with complications, fortunately, as might have been the case, but yet serious. This is what happened. A large number of pilgrims

went one day to the Pantheon, and one of them wrote in what may be called the visitors' book, next to the tomb of Victor Emmanuel, *Vive le Pape Roi.* The news of this indiscretion, soon undistinguishable from an insult, transpired among the Roman populace as flames move among things combustible, and a tumult arose, and some hard hitting occurred, and some unfriendly phrases were tossed about. At the head of the procession had been carried the tricolour of France, and it was little wonder that, the explosion once fired, the detonations went rolling up and down through Italy, and that even the Italian Government was forced to take notice, and to ask if France had not been very indiscreet, and what she meant by such indiscretion. So French diplomacy stepped in, and there were apologies, which some of the Catholics of France asserted were a staining and a humiliation of the flag, and what might have become a very serious affair indeed was smoothed over. However, lest there should be something further of the same sort, the Minister of Public Worship, though late in his intervention, wrote the following very proper letter to the bishops and archbishops of France: —

"You know the incidents so to be regretted which have just occurred at Rome during the pilgrimages known as pilgrimages of 'French workmen.' You are too alive to the best interests of the nation not to think, with me, that all

the authorities of the country ought to avoid becoming compromised in demonstrations which may easily lose their religious character. I therefore have the honour to invite you to abstain for the moment from all participation in these pilgrimages."

Could anything have been more admirably proper? And this was the language of the secular superior of all the ecclesiastical functionaries of France, — a man who certainly had the right to command compliance in all the interests of patriotism. In this spirit, it is gratifying to record, it was received everywhere. But this Monseigneur Gouthe-Soulard chose to take it quite otherwise, and wrote a letter in reply which, considering all the circumstances, — such things, that is, as the difficulty the republican government, which is undoubtedly now the only form suitable to the modern France, has always found in inspiring respect among monarchists of an impossible loyalty, and the way the Church has been always unnecessarily mixed up in this dissension; such things as that he himself owed his place to the present administration; such things as that by putting spokes in the wheels of the government in thus breaking its laws, he retarded greatly, by reason of his high influence, the desirable end of pacification, and the impression of dignity and solidity so important for France to give to the world if it would regain its political eminence among the

Great Powers, — considering all this sort of thing, I say, Monseigneur Gouthe-Soulard's letter, rehearsing false histories of republican persecution, and denying much too vivaciously the authority of the government, and thus by implication the duty of all men to keep the laws of the land, was one of the most unpatriotic documents ever produced. I would wish to print this letter intact, and the record of subsequent events, including the archbishop's defence at his trial, and the able review of the case made by M. Beaurepaire, the Procureur-Général, for the entire incident is of interest; but it is not necessary to devote more space to what is, after all, for me now only an illustration. The archbishop's whole conception of his duty was very inadequate, and he and those who went with him in his defence were wanting in a proper sense of patriotism; and this illustrates why the need of a right sense as to this thing should still be pressing. And so it must continue, it must be perennial, so long as such questions as this one in France exist, the duty there of loyalty, of harmony, of unity, even at a good deal of personal cost; or so long as the United States in North America persists in not opening its eyes quite widely to great questions like that of immigration, or the reform of the civil service; or so long as such a thing may happen as that a distinguished scholar like M. Clermont-Ganneau shall be prevented from obtaining

his legitimate recognition as the real discoverer of the remarkable historic frauds associated with the name of the distinguished Shapira,—prevented because of the singular notion that it really matters more to what country a wise man belongs than whether he be wise; so long, for instance, as people of Irish blood in America confound the word "nationality" with the word "nation;" or so long as the English conscience does not in some way summon to its aid (against all the ideals of the liberty of the press and the equality of all before the law) some ingenious scheme to alter its present modes of procedure in the divorce court, resulting in such unpleasant and unnecessary revelations as we all nowadays are being let read as the result of the most approved and modern systems of cross-examination.

So let patriotism have its due as a great thing in the world still, both as incentive and as duty. There will always be a kind of moral persuasion upon most people, a force emanating directly from the community in which they are born, which will keep them in those moods which are known as loyal or patriotic, even if it does not lead them to exaggerate the power of these fine ideas; and although, as I have been showing, people often make mistakes and get false ideas about patriotism and loyalty, so that in reality they may not be half patriotic enough, the common sense of the

community may sometimes be left to correct such errors and lessen the dangers of the exaggerated or false patriotism. So this danger may be put out of account in appreciating the value of patriotism, and the necessity of it in a certain sense may be granted without more ado. But what I said at first about the change in the force and extent of its persuasiveness in the world to-day is the main point upon which I would insist. There is no doubt about that: patriotism is no longer the thing it was.

A real service is done to others always in expressing freshly their common but unspoken conviction upon any serious matter. A writer who does this runs a chance of being read, and indeed risks almost all of the other dangerous honours upon the long Appian Way of the classics, so constantly overrun by the Goths and Vandals of letters. I lay no claim to the possession of a heart eager for encounters with any of these breezy Northmen. But the chief corroboration of my way of thinking on these matters of patriotism and cosmopolitism as contrasted ideals for the moment (although they overlap again and again in reality) is, after all, the fact that I chance, without originality, to be expressing only the common and increasing, but as yet unconfessed, conviction of most widely awakened men in all countries, a conviction which has been forced upon them by the very growth and

expansion of the time. Every moment makes a compacter Earth, and makes the thought and act of each of the most indifferent of us more responsible and quickly efficient things than ever they have been before. And the first great effect of this world-contraction is just this growing suspicion as to the absolute value of international barriers, and this opening of individual minds, which have made patriotism not at all the thing it was. But "common sense" in a community — a thing which is a very justly vaunted mark of English-speaking communities — cannot uniformly as yet be trusted to be really sane in any large sort of way. There is unfortunately no assurance, as all these random illustrations with which we have been dealing indicate, that "common sense" as yet — even in this rapidly contracting world — can unfailingly detect the true patriotism from the false. "Common sense" is very short-sighted. "Common sense" has not even the privilege of clairvoyance. "Common sense" is a very dogged, persistent foe of the ideal, and it rarely generalises rapidly enough for events.

This is what English history is always betraying, and never more painfully than at the present time. The English — a people who pass for being logical, but who stumble on their course more heavily weighted than any other people in a kind of ponderous *sabot* of

"common sense" of a certain sort—are, unfortunately for themselves, not really logical after all. Happily the clog-gait, however, and oddly enough, is a positive gain for humanity.

Consider for a moment the English record. The Romans may have been as successful as the English have been in the reorganisation of conquered provinces, in the civilising of the outer world less complicated than that just beyond the walls of Rome and beyond Italy; but no modern peoples have shown anything like English ability in reconstructing in a special mould various and utterly alien races, for no modern peoples have had just the English tangible ideal, their practical genius for institutions. With this thought in the mind one looks about one's planet with astonishment. Undeviating energy, such as went to the making of New England and then leapt to the westward over the Alleghanies; such as crystallised, legalised, let me say institutionised, the vast and varied nationalities of India; such as is now disporting itself in its final field of activity, the great new world of Africa of the South, —is both admirable, and unrivalled. And Egypt needs not be omitted from this list. Yet this energy, arising from the need of healthy activity, and a very narrow, unphilosophic, but practical passion for personal aggrandisement, has always (I cannot think of an exception on any large scale) been an extremely selfish

impulse. Breadth of vision, ideality, the sense of humanity (except — and not always then[1] — when interpreted to this people in ideas of justice or injustice), have not been English marks; and yet without these native characteristics, even any intimate sense of common kinship, when portions of the same nation are separated by wide, estranging seas, inevitably tends to disappear. The individual problems, the individual interests, are usually all-important to the English, and the general drift has always been the same in this race wherever a cleavage has occurred. Australia and Canada to-day are loyal chiefly from inertia and from gallantry; the centre of gravity of their patriotism has shifted, and is no longer at Greenwich. It is not needful to prove so obvious a remark. An exceptional and perhaps laudable astuteness in political conduct could even have withstood for a little this very omnipo-

[1] *Civis Romanus sum* was a grand cry. Of its best intent we have an inkling in the "idea" of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius, — the idea "of a polity in which there is the same law for all, a polity administered with regard to equal rights and equal freedom of a people, and the idea of a kingly government which respects most of all the freedom of the governed." But, as Mr. Gladstone, in the famous debate in the English Parliament in 1850, on the claims of Don Pacifico, declared, the phrase has a certain "inapplicability to the condition and claims of an English citizen." English blood, however, usually finds much difficulty in throbbing in consonance with this opinion.

tence in the onrush of the time. Colonial loyalty and patriotism could have been directed yet a while still to the same island centre, and we should not even now be hearing Sir Richard Cartwright and Mr. Cecil Rhodes delivering speeches which in an "unconstitutional" monarchy would be thought high treason, and even but three hundred years ago in England had been punished as such. Such astuteness, however, is not in the English blood. Fortunately for the interests of humanity, English patriotism, while not really of the large stamp, being so maladroitly fanned, is having, however, the best of results; and this digression shows, I believe, what I meant in saying that the clog-gait is sweet music in His Holiness the Zeitgeist's ears; for this august personage is working avowedly in the interests of humanity, rather than in those of any particular, even the most amiable or worthy, section of it.

But let the illustration of English colonisation be pursued, indeed, with even more analysis still. Take such an article as I read the other day in the *Times* on the largest and most interesting of modern English institutions, the British South Africa Company. The article to which I refer appeared just on the day before the first regular meeting of this immense organization was to be held in London, and it was conceived in a really uncommon spirit of frankness. It

was written, moreover, not only with candour, but, on the whole, with literary probity. But scattered throughout this article were a number of sentences like this: —

"Germany *fortunately was not then ripe* for colonial enterprise."

Then, speaking of a proposed German expedition into Matabele Land from Walfish Bay, in 1885, this article said: —

"*Fortunately*, by an *accidental circumstance* the expedition was postponed, and our government had time to realise the *seriousness* of the situation."

Now, such passages as these are inspired, naïvely inspired, with the very breath of the old admirable patriotism, — the patriotism which, after love of God and love of father and mother, all conventionally brought up young people in most Christian countries have learned to be binding. And although it would be a simple thing instantly to add many a passage more efficient for my purpose, none needs be better. For how self-revealed, in all its fine boyish inadequateness, such a patriotism is. Like a rosy baby in a bath, Patriotism stands here naked and unashamed. As it happens, indeed, the *Times* is positively right. It *is* a fortunate thing, if somebody's conscience is to be saddled with the weighty responsibility of setting

a-rolling across Africa over native bodies the great bespangled Juggernaut car of civilisation, that that conscience should be English; for when Englishmen are confronted before Rhadamanthus with the debit account against them of the long list of murders and of selfish plunderings which always mark the path of the Christian peoples in new lands, and especially of this one, as the long tragedy of the American Indians illustrates, they may be able to commute the death-sentence to a paltry twenty years' penal servitude, perhaps, owing merely to the proofs afforded on the credit page of the same ledger of the speed with which bridges and roads, and post-offices and telegraph lines, and schools and churches and courts, have sprung up, more numerous in South Africa in five years than would have been the case in twenty under any other bandits. But this, I fancy, was not the line of thought of the writer of these sentences; and the content of his words, what he himself sought to express, and did express even more completely than he imagined at the time, was simply his own patriotism, the intense loyalty of the English marrow. The facts throughout his article are given, I imagine, with fairness. In one place the writer even speaks in hostile criticism of some of the methods of the Company in question, in such terms as follow: "Just such blunders as these have been committed by Eng-

lishmen with respect to similar enterprises in Africa and elsewhere during the past four hundred years." And of no man speaking with reference to his countrymen shall we ever expect more than this in the way of criticism; such frankness is positively touching. But this unwitting, most natural, interpretation of the facts is an interesting thing. The spirit of it is so uncritical; so uncritical, although, after all, what is said, is so true. It reminds one directly of the still more patriotic way that the Hebrew writers had,—of the style, for instance, of the Homeric book of Judges. One passage in particular returns to me in the force of all its unpremeditated charm. It was in the time of the wars with Ammon, when Jephthah, a "mighty man of valour," indeed the most notorious foot-pad of the time, deigned to parley with the outrageous insolence of the Ammonites in their desire to recover land formerly taken from them by the Israelites when they issued from Egypt. Jephthah sent messengers to the Ammonites, and in fact did so more than once,—messengers whom he instructed to deny absolutely the legal right of that people to the land in dispute; and he asserted his position with a strenuous, persistent, but naïve eloquence which on every other rule of international law than that associated with the name of Rob Roy, who was surely among the most conspicuous to apply the principle of the survival of the fittest

to these questions, was really sophistical. The gist of his position was briefly, in his own language, this: —

"So now the Lord, the God of Israel, hath dispossessed the Amorites from before his people Israel, and shouldest thou possess them? Wilt not thou possess that which Chemosh they god giveth thee to possess? *So whomsoever the Lord our God hath dispossessed from before us, them will we possess.*"

There is no gainsaying this, it is so admirably direct, it is so strenuously patriotic. But between these words and those of the writer in the *Times*, "*fortunately*, by an *accidental circumstance* the expedition was postponed, and our government had time to realise the *seriousness* of the situation," how little difference there is! The formulas are altered. The writer in the *Times* speaks of "*accidental circumstances*" where his predecessor talks about "*the Lord God of Israel.*" But the spirit of the two writers is quite the same, so much so, indeed, that it would almost seem quite in the face of all that I have been saying that patriotism is as much as ever patriotism, and that I have been hopelessly wrong.

But there is a difference, nevertheless, and the change in the formulas is a great thing. All this talk about England's splendid gift for dominance, her prac-

tical genius for colonisation, and the parallel between the style of the writer in the *Times* and that of the author of *Judges*, are useful in gradually bringing us nearer to a more critical sense of what patriotism really is, and what patriotism should be, and even when it should not exist at all. And as I said, a useful thing for us all is to know how to detect the true patriotism from the false, lest ever, in being quite patriotic according to the "common sense" of the community into which our parents precipitated us, we likewise succeed all unwittingly in being really ridiculous, and in losing the advantages of a certain larger air. But the inquiry, though always one which, inevitably, we shall be pursuing individually forever, can never cease to be anything but complex, indeed must become rapidly more and more complex for all of us. It was a comparatively simple thing for Jephthah to make up his patriotic mind as to his proper line of conduct at a time when the great duty of a leader was to create the feeling of unity and nationality, and to secure, at any cost, compactness of national fibre; and it is not much more complicated a question for Lord Salisbury to-day to see that English imperial safety, English patriotism, demands an understanding with the Sultan regarding Egypt, and the giving of every facility in South Africa to the great companies there which, incidentally in search of territory and of gold,

are seeking only to abolish slavery in those regions.[1] But the problem is not so simple for Englishmen in Canada, in Newfoundland, in Ireland, in Australia; was not the other day for citizens of the North American United States in respect to Chili, or now in Behring Sea, or the Isthmus of Panama, or when they have to legislate on immigration and naturalisation; for the Tsar in respect to Finland; for the Emperor Francis Joseph, with Count Apponyi and the young Tzechs and the Croats on his hands at once, or when he remembers that he is a good Catholic, and at the same time the second great factor of the Triple Alliance; for the Emperor of China, with the officiousness of England and America, anxious about their missionaries, to cope with; above all, for the German Emperor, inoculated with the imperial blood of the hierarchic Hohenzollerns, the incarnation of one of the two great principles surviving from the times of superstition which science and criticism have now almost sent to the limbo of useless human inventions, divine right and

[1] Though this sound like sarcasm, I hasten to wash my hands of flippancy like this. "This railway," said Mr. Chamberlain the other day at a "Liberal Union" dinner in London of the Mombasa railway, "which we are told, and which we believe, would lead to the practical suppression of slavery over a great part of the African continent, would also incidentally extend British influence and promote British commerce." No laughter is reported by the stenographer of the *Times*.

papal infallibility — above all, I say, for this German Emperor when he thinks on his pillow of the provinces of Alsace and of Lorraine.

So that no one of us can now go flippantly by such considerations as these with any light sense of our individual responsibility to settle at least for our own satisfaction the sense that these old words and formulas are to have for us to-day. And if any one tells me that there is something rather remote, something too transcendental and not very pressing in these matters, so that I had much better be doing something else than to call attention to them, the burden of proof may be on my side, but I shall not protest with him over much. I desire only quietly to imagine that I am right, and that he is flippantly wrong. I recall M. Renan: *Ce qui me semble un monstre dans l'humanité, c'est l'indifférence et la légèreté.*

Yes, the matter is really serious, and has large bearings; for it is nothing more or less than the great question whether or not any closely-knit community nowadays is consciously to retard the streams of tendencies that are making for human uplifting. When Spartans were shut within their beautiful valley under the snow-ridge of Taygetos, isolated, almost inaccessible, the laws of their compact state, taking their natural growth, became individual, peculiar, but picturesquely suitable to the people, the moment, and the place.

We have happened on other times; and yet when we do not use the formulas of the Greeks and Latins, we build with the Gothic *débris* of the Middle Age. "When Paris is right or wrong," says M. Arsène Houssaye, "it is the fault of Athens or of Rome." This, depend upon it, is not as it should be; for while the planet, to the naked eye, is ever almost the same, the nations that laugh and cry upon its surface are vastly, determinably, irrecoverably changed.

Any demand made upon us, therefore, in restriction of our individual liberty to think freely as citizens of the planet first, with our thoughts and vision on larger notions than those of nation, or even of race, must, in general, be resisted. It is unwarrantable repression. My charge against patriotism is mainly this, that it has usually been a sanctioned obligation thrust upon us all at the expense of the dignity of human nature; and in substituting for it a less repressive passion, I have but one regret, namely, that I did not invent the phrase, "the passion for the planet." Such a passion certainly points the way to what is clearly a more desirable end at this time for us all.

But I recognize a danger in writing in this fashion. I am afraid that the more we know of the human temper, the less its present dignity is apt to impress us; the less indeed we shall have to say about its dignity at all, with any such meaning as both Chris-

tianity and Science have up to this century usually put into that word.[1] Mankind has believed ever in a chosen people, and then it got the notion of a chosen race; and even Science clung for a long time to the inspiriting conception of a chosen planet, and even the broadest humanity has, quite without a suspicion of narrowness, almost always ruled out every creature save the human, — save man, who, drunk with his own imaginings, and without criticism, declared himself made in the image of a god whose form and features he himself had unwittingly invented. The great poets, to be sure, saw with a more discerning intuition. The Egyptians of the early, unpedantic faith, a Saint Francis of Assisi, a Wordsworth, are sufficiently isolated and dissimilar instances to indicate that complete Nature — the Nature, I mean, that the scientific impulse gives us — has always and everywhere had a few sympathetic adorers. But for the most part the nations up to just the other day had gone on in roads worn each century more deeply, and affording ever less and less outlook across their hedges. The gods

[1] Compare "Hopkinsianism," however, and "Edwardsism," with their formulas about the "principle of divine sovereignty," with the relegation of the prerogatives of "absolute monarchy" to God, — a scheme in which man's conformity to the "means of grace" and his almost superhuman struggle to find the way to the "foot of the throne," were a kind of man-baiting practised by an Almighty Chief of the Sports.

would seem to have been, for some five thousand years, drinking or hunting on Olympus. Apparently an intolerable boredom, at some time about the middle of the last century, filled all the corridors and lobbies of the Olympian palace. Hermes himself would appear to have fallen asleep, in some long afternoon siesta. Then, Zeus, waking from his lethargy and casting about for a decorous diversion, conceived a secret plan and despatched Hermes with sealed orders. These, opened on the journey, read as follows: "Away to Solar System No. 8,369,868,3221+, Planet No. 3, European Division. Section France! Electrify all heads. The race of Earth moves too slowly. Afterwards go with Hephaistos to England and to New England, American Division, and let us see what you can do." And everybody knows what happened.

But although there are incidents of just the other day like the French and American Revolutions, and although there are books and lives and achievements which one does well to remember, and which do make us think so much better of the capacity of mankind on "Planet No. 3, Solar System No. 8,369,868,322+," that we really may be amiable to our commiserating friends the optimists and the Comtists and what not, and tolerate a certain amount of after-dinner talk about our present dignity as men, yet I wish distinctly myself to avoid laying any stress on the word; for our

slight civilisation really cannot as yet, to any critical sense, warrant so fine an epithet. We have done too little; before us lies too vast a future.[1]

Yet the trouble with patriotism in distinction from cosmopolitism is — and now I may return to my remark without danger of misconception — the trouble with patriotism is mainly this, that, being always one of the class of popular obligations with a "moral" sanction, it has ordinarily exercised a compulsion which has limited our interests and our freer growth to a degree seriously injurious, not merely to individual

[1] In that vast future, however, what problems will be solved, what ameliorations secured, what insights revealed! I often think of the words of Buffon: "Loin de se décourager, le philosophe doit applaudir à la nature, lors même qu'elle lui paraît avare ou trop mystérieuse, et se féliciter de ce qu'à mesure qu'il lève une partie de son voile, elle lui laisse entrevoir une immensité d'autres objets, tous dignes de ses recherches. Car ce que nous connaissons déjà doit nous faire juger de ce que nous pouvons connaître; l'esprit humain n'a point de bornes, il s'étend à mesure que l'univers se déploie; l'homme peut donc et doit tout tenter; il ne lui faut que du temps pour tout savoir. Il pourrait même, en multipliant ses observations, voir et prévoir tous les phénomènes, tous les événements de la nature, avec autant de vérité et de certitude que s'il les déduisait immédiatement des causes; et quel enthousiasme plus pardonnable et même plus noble que celui de croire l'homme capable de reconnaître toutes les puissances, et découvrir par ses travaux tous les secrets de la nature!" It is a dream of a new heaven and a new earth, but henceforward only science can fly so straight against the sun on poetic wings.

expansion, but to the whole "dignity of humanity." And it is just this larger end, this dignity of humanity, that is perforce the goal, I suppose, of all of us. Patriotism has tended always to be one of the most exacting of those ideals that stifle our naturalness and free play; and yet it is only by sincerity, by complete confidence in oneself, by quiet, open-eyed persistence in one's own faith, whatever others may think or say, that we can ever hope to merit the recording of any single achievement of ours, however slight, on the pages of Time's note-book of the best. That kind of patriotism, then, is discernibly useless which imprisons any large impulses or retards mankind on this high course. As a political or social being man is bound always to be an opportunist. Opportunism is the only moral, because it is the only possible, method of man's going. And this implies a myriad of compromises, a myriad of acts that in any absolute view are follies and vulgarities, but are relatively not merely important, not merely "good," but inevitable. The play of destiny as we are, we must all make up our minds to restriction. We live in a prison; and although we never see the Warder, His iron bars and chains must chafe us forever, and some of us to death. But there is some solace — it is at all events the only one that we have — that we may look about us at what lies just near at hand, and get a pretty clear

notion of what it is that is chafing us, and best of all study (for without such study we shall never know anything worth knowing) ourselves. With the one divining-rod, Curiosity, we may conjure so much of Truth as to know that we are at least not any longer being deceived. Nor is this so unsatisfying an assurance after all. For this one thing, at least, we may know, that we necessarily make some progress. But because much that is called patriotism, in repressing something of our freedom and sincerity, and in making the worse appear the better reason, can only retard us, can only veil the vision of the spectacle of the various and richly humanising planet-view, it is very questionable whether we can afford to cultivate it at the expense of this other ideal, this hope of getting at last a wider scope.

To those of us who chance to deal with the instrument of the English tongue, the facts which are for us personally insistent must always belong to a peculiar series, must appeal always with a special force. We cannot evade nationality, even were wisdom in that way. And the critic has his own passionate attachments, which it is no part of his obligation to reveal. There is the English oak and the holly, and the high gloss of the green on the box-leaves at the season of the English Christmas, — symbols all round the planet,

for those who came out of the rich, specialised, individual English land, of warm, wholesome life and hearty, unthinking optimism. And to all those endeared traditions for which these symbols stand many of us would always cling more tenaciously than to any marked by so unintelligible a sign as, for instance, the orchid, detached recipient of all that is borne on every wind; or as the banyan, spreading and variously striking root, although without loss of identity, over wide stretches of after all common ground; or as the elm, that throws its shadow in New English highways across delightful memorable gables.

But of such individual loves and such special attachments I have deliberately here said nothing. Not even at this moment did it seem worth while to insist that the great, new, yet now ageing world of the United States of North America, with its temper so perennially fresh, and yet with origins so venerable, appears to me individually the land where all the interesting solutions of the problems that haunt men's minds to-day are to be first written in intelligible letters for the very race itself. And if this is to be in time the large privilege of this land, its sons may now and then be suffered to set up their own particular ancestral gods even in the open, and to felicitate themselves even in uncritical terms upon their fair lot at being under so

apparently responsible, so fortunate a destiny. But even for such devotees as these there will be no harm in remembering Chemosh and the Ammonites; for it is in the spirit of such double recollection that wisdom may most readily be found.

# ENGLISH AND "AMERICANS."

# ENGLISH AND "AMERICANS."

> I speak with the freedom of history, and I hope without offence — BURKE.

## I.

THERE is often a restful charm in generalisation. This word stands at times for possibilities of intelligent pleasure to be indulged in without any of the irritation sure to be aroused in well-ordered minds by crackling paradox. A child busies itself by the hour with iron-filings and a magnet; and grown-up babies find a similar but keener pleasure in tempering pet magnets of their own, and then in proudly proving their attracting and co-ordinating power throughout the apparent chaos of the world's facts. But unsuccessful generalisation worries rather than comforts, even though it suggest. So that when an English friend of mind the other day thought to mark for me the present drift of society in the North American United States by saying that in that country, in its supposed aping of English manners, the rest of the civilised world was enjoying the amusing spectacle of an entire nation playing the part of the prodigal son,

—of a nation that had sought after strange gods in other lands, and was now returning in repentance to the ancestral mansion and the lordly park,—I too, in my turn, ventured to be amused, and made the generalisation of my own that there is everything in the point of view. On the text of this remark I began with him a monologue, contrasting English and American life. Now and then I trod upon my friend's insular toes. But I am bound to say that he was too well-bred, and not quite insular enough, having read much and travelled widely, at the time to wince. However, he promised to answer me at our next meeting. Meanwhile I have looked over the matter anew, and put down some preliminary notes, English and New English, to guide him in his reply. I warn him that every word I utter is either quite meaningless or altogether false apart from its entire context.

The vitality of England is shown in her power of successful colonisation; and there is an English superstition that her safety lies, and that it has always lain, in being beloved by Poseidon. To argue this point completely would require a quiet discussion of what kind of safety is worth having for a nation; and on this point there are many notions. But England, at all events, has not been very vague as regards her

own notion, and of this great sea-god she has been an easy-going and unquestioning lover, with an almost unnatural measure of tact. Her great rival beyond the Channel, against whose sea-lights her own send challenging gleams nightly, has commonly been characterised by a certain habit of impulse, and by an impetuous sincerity in the realisation of her Gallic convictions, which the typical Englishman has never understood. Whenever he has found himself beginning to admire this greater spontaneity of thought, and consequently of action, in France, he has thought it loyalty to his sovereign to harden his heart and dull his sensibilities, in Pharaonic fashion, against that modicum of approval which would be betrayed by even the early stages of favourable appreciation. This is true even to-day, and in general always has been true, notwithstanding the Continental affectations of the small-toed court of William II., the mental attitudes of a third Earl of Shaftesbury, or of a finer than he, the Matthew Arnold of our own time, of a Wordsworth sonneteering eloquently in praise of liberty, or of the present mild-eyed Oxford School of devotees of M. Paul Bourget; for the moment I am engaged in a determination of the broad lines of national characteristics, now fast disappearing as England becomes rapidly more cosmopolitan, not of some conflicting and troublesome exceptions proving

the presence in this misty island of important varieties of blood not distinctively English.

Individually, to the penetrating student of history and human nature, average England has not been admirable, but it has rarely failed to be really interesting; for in the constantly varied Philistinism of our English race there has always been no end of ironical delight to be got from our picturesqueness, our absurd incompleteness, our unclassical note of provinciality. Yet at home, save in those surface eccentricities of aspect so easily caricatured by keen observers, Englishmen, speaking generally, have not shown great individuality. This can easily be maintained, in the face of Dickens and Hogarth and Cruikshank, who are to be conveniently *taken out* to prove my point: *exceptiones probant regulas.*

The types of largest human interest have tended always to break away from England. Like the planet Saturn, — if indeed not like the primeval god himself, whom, as he imagined, times and seasons served, and who was so enamoured of his own creations that he devoured his own children, who naturally, therefore, did not care to live at home, — England has sloughed her fancied useless members in far-reaching rings of colonisation. The English island is not so small as it appears on the map; but it has never been large enough to hold men who thought too

much ahead of them. Thinking behind has been tolerated, and indeed cultivated, and in such thinking no people has equalled the English; thinking under authority and from sanctioned prejudices has pleased Englishmen, has pleased Oxford and Cambridge, and has been dry-nursed into a national habit of mind by large and generous endowments. But any obvious breaking away from the conventional has so far taken a line of immoral eccentricity as to be too often damned as inconvenient in the good old-fashioned sense of the word, and practically proved so by being ejected. Such ejection masquerades to the English sense as the preservation of law and order. But is it not really keeping the cover down upon any unpleasant surprise that might start up from too sudden a view of the ugly-headed Jack-in-the-box Truth? For every new idea, to men so well established as England's gentlemen have been and are, in Church and State and country seats, is almost ugly and inconvenient. The mere mechanical devices and scientific discoveries of the latter half of the nineteenth century, which have forced into a juxtaposition before undreamed of every quarter of the globe, have tempered isolated insolence, wherever found, to a certain appearance of urbanity and affectation of comity. But some peoples have needed tempering more than others, and our England of Spartan reti-

cence and self-sufficiency is essentially Doric England still.

England, I said just now, has never been large enough to hold men who thought too much ahead of them. The sentence certainly needs illumination, but perhaps it becomes a more plausible assertion if I add that people in England who let their minds play freely are often forced to live lives of convention and compromise utterly inconsistent with their actual intellectual attitudes and their deepest convictions. English liberty is liberty of thought and expression, but not of action; and yet how energetic the English are! The English mind, while less imaginative than most, is, in all forms of logical activity, surer of its results than any other, and the steadiest in the world. Yet to be steady is not always to be sane, intelligent; and the want of imagination has been so essential a lack! With an all but unrivalled capacity for pure thinking when he chooses to exercise his mind, there are discernible quite unmistakable proofs that in practical realisation of his intellectual beliefs even the liberty-loving Englishman does not like to stand alone. He is constantly, moreover, postponing the donning of his thinking-cap; but in this he manifests perhaps merely the temporary indifference of conscious strength. The pleasant exhaustion consequent upon his manly activity in the hunting or

football field, or in the lazy delights of the ineffable punt, is not directly conducive to thinking upon any subject more remote than how to have a bath before dinner. Like the healthy Spartan that he is, the Englishman in this mood regards with wholesome disgust the merest flavour of Attic salt. Attic salt partially paralyses his *papillæ*, scarcely keeping their virtue unimpaired for the detection of the proper bouquet of lusty port. With no necessity, therefore, of thinking, in the shadow of a Church and State that thinks for you, a Church whose bells, on each periodic Sunday, multitudinously applaud the achievements of dignified and self-sufficient England, and while there are so many legitimate and obviously superior interests in the open air, wooing river, pawing horses, eager hounds, England proudly rests content — and who can wonder? — in the strength and dignity she has secured for herself by her own unaided efforts. With little capability of detecting the drift in society and in events, the streams of social tendency with the rise of the people, she is quite unharassed by the worry of these questions until they press and cry indecorously for attention. When at last actually this time has come, England grips all such problems one by one as they advance, and considers them with an extraordinary steadiness of intent vision, and an admirable and painstaking

caution. But the word "cautious" as applied to the English is surely the ethical name merely for a certain wise inertia. Yet the quality is one of many indications of England's practical sense and worldly wisdom. All history is compromise. But English history is marked by compromise more particularly than any other, although few histories can boast of being less "compromising."

Pre-eminently, England's instinct is to be fair. Her history has been a long struggle towards equity. But the English character, while sworn in the long run to justice, partakes also of — nay, I may say glories in — a more general and not less admirable quality of human nature, selfishness. The combination and co-operation of these two ideals, to be selfish, — which we have always cultivated beyond the mere needs of self-preservation, wherever we English have lived in the world, — and the peculiar English sense of justice and fair-play, which seems to suffer deterioration away from the island, explain the distinctive character of English history. That portion of English society which is the heir of the feudal lord has always been aware that sooner or later the old order supporting it would change. But the problem, born of a natural conservative desire, has been how most slowly to accomplish this change; how long it is feasible and possible to postpone the inevitable. An Englishman

ordinarily finds the old ways sufficient for his purpose. English country roads, bordered by hedgerows of honeysuckle, blackberry, and May, are grooves deep-worn. The changes from feudalism to the divine right of kings; from the absolute monarchy of the Stuarts to the constitutional government of the succession; the social and political revolutions marked by the Reform Bills, the Corn Laws, the Municipal Corporation and the Education Acts, — of all these changes or measures none was undertaken till the conditions of each time became so literally intolerable as to force the questions to serious and final issue. Then the Englishman of convention listened to the dictates of the Englishman of sanity and worldly wisdom, and recognized the soundness of the latter's advice to play for a time his long-unaccustomed, but not unnatural, *rôle* of Sir Giles Fairplay, the Englishman of justice. The political sagacity of Englishmen may be summed up in their firm conviction that a stitch just in time saves nine; and whatever political chagrin they have suffered has arisen from a neglect of this principle, which they know the value of really better than any other people in the world.

For men, therefore, who have thought too enthusiastically ahead of them or before their time, England may justly be said to be as small as it looks. The case seems, then to afford a pretty paradox, in which

I see again a Spartan parallel. The existing liberty of action seems in no way commensurate with the liberty allowed in thought. Here is the result of a philosophy giving the direct lie to the Socratic principle that virtue is knowledge. England has defended this position with a certain wilfulness and — may I add? — pretence. *There is no god but Convention, and Compromise is his prophet:* so runs the English Koran. Progress must come, but let its advance be decorous. Righteousness, English righteousness, has been obedience to the strict, straight lines of Church and State. There is something pre-Christian, theocratic, early Jewish, about this. Righteousness and religion have been separated in the English from personal convictions; thus separated, they become a thing apart, and, by an optical illusion, a good in themselves, a sacred thing, without vital human relationship. We thus get the anomaly of the inhabitants of an entire island affirming their belief and trust in a host of traditions, superstitions, or old-time rules, political, religious, social, quite beyond which nine-tenths of the individual members composing the community have carried their thought, and which in their own individual thinking they do not for one moment take into account. This is a sublime and ornamental hypocrisy, which England shares with the old Israel and the Rome of the earlier Cæsars. Were it not at present so

general as to be thoroughly well understood, it might be morally injurious. But, as it is, its existence is always silently and mutually taken for granted; and thus, there being really no deception, it has rarely brought down the destructive wrath of the avenging gods. Among the Northern States of America such hypocrisy is not a national sin. But this is because his clothes, for the most part, still fit the Englishman there. The England of the island clings fondly to the old bottles, while New England had in most cases to make new ones, and is without the former's temptations to vamp the old. In England hypocrisy is innocuous because pervasive and an element in all men's calculations. It is the tax respectability lays upon her children for being the sons of their mother, thus taking advantage of their loyalty; and it is a tax apparently very easy to be borne. New England and the Western States of the United States which sprang from her loins have scarcely developed hypocrisy, because, in the first place, these people could more easily manage, whenever they have wakened to the necessity, to throw off the incubus of their many odious theoretical rules of life, since the rules are not so heavily weighted by authority in America as in England; moreover, their quality has not been tried as yet, and, for the most part, what conventions, social or religious, they did take with them, they still, in the sweet innocence

of their hearts, believe in, not having thought so far afield as the Englishman of the island. When they do begin to think, frequently they express themselves in the worst possible form. Colonel Ingersoll, as a writer on religion, would be heard as little of in England as Mr. Bradlaugh; but in North America, both to the honour and the dishonour of the people, he created once a Satanic uproar. This simply meant that to large bodies of people there his ideas were an appreciable and novel attraction, and that such followers had not the habit of criticism and culture to see the whole bearing of his contentions. His impatience, his lack of perspective, his style of hue and cry, exactly suited them. The little knowledge of the host of readers in North America eager for wisdom speaks out with a blatant sincerity which drives hypocrisy crouching to a corner of the wall. Few of them could understand how in a certain state hypocrisy has become a virtue, or at least a tolerated and even cultivated habit of mind, and that that state is the admirable England of Doric reticence and compromise.

Some of the more agreeable features among the island social customs most appreciated by foreigners, especially by the New English, arise from this national characteristic of self-sufficiency, this Doric reticence and insular provincialism. An illustration in point is the average treatment of the guest in a country

house. To put guests at their ease should, I imagine, be the great aim of entertainment; and how charmingly is this end accomplished in England! This ability has an air of being inborn; but it frequently arises, not from a sense of fitness and true politeness, as when seen in New Englishmen, but really from the isolating racial selfishness by virtue of which an individual member of society, insisting upon being let alone himself, readily allows others, by the mere device of neglect, the same pleasure. The plan works well, it works naturally. And the opposite ideal of social entertainment seen in New England, and equally inalienable from the blood as there developing, works only with friction,—the tactless struggle, I mean, to render oneself agreeable, the nervous anxiety a guest is almost sure to encounter in a host who fears that he may suffer from *ennui* if every moment be not filled for him. This is almost capable of becoming exasperating; it renders the average relation in New English society almost intolerable to one who has tasted the delightful independence of the unencumbered hours in an English country house. But whatever the results may be, are not the causes such as given? The Englishman, with a state all terraced with societies of philanthropy, is at heart as little of the Good Samaritan as the New English Voltaire, Franklin. Englishmen appear to fill the mountain road, healing

volcanoes of sores on thousands of beggars. All the time, Arnold Toynbee and the rest aside, — all the time, at heart and as a nation, not from ill-will, but from mere inertia, they are eager to pass by on the other side. On the contrary, the American is more genuinely generous and flexible. The generosity of his brother of the island is still Puritan, and largely takes the form of a sop to a growling conscience, which may be ignored during the process of digestion. But I would not presume to judge whether or not it is better to toss the sop to conscience than to convention.

In considering so curiously this English characteristic marked by the agreeable custom I have cited, I willingly plead guilty to all manner of frankness in indulging in praise more bitter-sweet than sweet. But if this seem quite scientifically outspoken, much more, I fear, will be the wider illustration it occurs to me now to give. My friend who compared the Exodus of the people of the United States to England with the classical Return of the Prodigal Son probably was not aware of the full significance of the fact expressed so epigrammatically in the remark from which he drew his insular conclusion; but of the fact there can be no doubt. The banished English race, if it really get to know England, likes it. And Englishmen "take to Americans," as the phrase goes. This is a highly entertaining fact, and not unsignificant.

I hear "Americans" in London constantly asserting that they like to be there. They regard it as the most "livable" city in the world, and England, of which London is the eye, the most "livable" of countries. An Englishman, listening to this praise, is intensely gratified; and more than ever does he regard England as the centre of the solar system. *Laudari a viro laudato,* to be praised by the praised, Cicero says somewhere, quoting from another, is a keen, a very keen, satisfaction. And it is an agreeable titillation for the English *paterfamilias* to know that the children enjoy, when they return to it, the warmth and the big logs and the enticing settle of the old fireside. He *expects* it is a comforting compliment (for this is the very word, I am sorry to say, that he uses, believing himself to be speaking correctly the undefiled tongue of his fathers), but he did not dare to be unprepared for disappointment. However unlikely he would be to confess it, he is really proud of his errant child of energy. The "American" compliments him simply by being American. The American accent and intonation are intolerable to him; but the fund of life the American carries with him is exhilarating in England. He is like a boy coming back to the aged father and mother and brushing up the wits of the old people. The father believes that he forgets more nightly than the boy has ever known; but the

freshness of the boy's points of view, the depth and speed of his intuition, the engaging power of quaint suggestion, the inevitable alertness of mind, the buoyancy and enthusiasm of his average mood, — all these characteristics and qualities are so unexpected, so fresh and helpful, that the father cannot but admire, although he may be a good deal shocked. The Doric Englishman has become in America both Ionic and Corinthian; and there is no evidence that Sparta ever failed secretly to admire Athens or Corinth, however much she thought it her duty to disapprove of their gods.

Wherever we finally turn to account for the fact, to the atmosphere or the amalgamation of varied races, or, in general, to the total change in the environment, the fact itself will go unquestioned. The American of New England and the West, — for New England, roughly speaking, is a more distinctive and original English colony than the Virginias, — starting as an Englishman, has become in two centuries and a half a variant species, a new being. He seems making, at his best, towards an ideal type midway between the Frenchman and his own English forefathers. And now he comes back into the parent nest something of a cuckoo, except that he creates amusement rather than menacing annoyance. The Englishman likes him a "little bit," and he is devoted to the English-

man. What it all means I shall certainly not undertake to tell.

To an Englishman the world beyond the boundaries of his isle — and America and the Colonies are more truly so than other parts of the planet — is inhabited by barbarians, just as Dacia or Italy or Persia was to the Greek. In Athens it is easy to please the Athenians. Aspasia proved it in an eloquent bit of satirical rhetoric in Plato's *Menexenus,* and I have heard it proved in New England to New Englishmen *ad nauseam* in too many a Fourth of July oration. England's Parliament proves it nightly to the satisfaction of the readers of the *Times.* But the national pride of the United States, which has grown with the sense of achievement in the difficult process of working out its own salvation, differs widely in its character from the national pride of England, although both thrive on the glorious memories of portions of their past history. All the world, and especially the American and Colonial world, I have said, the Englishman thinks barbarian. Yet, after all, America is not quite barbarian to him, for it is only boyish, immature. The Englishman of North America might not be blamed for preferring the dubious company of the barbarians to the acceptance of the conventional distinction of the other classification. His sole comfort — I do not for one moment deny or assert that

this is enough — is in knowing that very likely he is an Englishman scaled of a good many prejudices and longer-sighted. But the natural language of the English national pride is, "Leave England, and you leave civilisation behind you." This is a tune played in England with variations. Whatever urbanity of manner England enjoys has been taken on only because it was found necessary, for any sort of success in the carrying out of her own policy, to veil her two chief characteristics, brutal energy and honest directness, in an ingratiating air of manners. This is the wholesome result of England's contact with the great world. The Shaftesbury who was the author of the *Characteristics*, one of the most urbane and un-English of English gentlemen, and the best critic of his time, has said: "All politeness is owing to liberty. We polish one another, and rub off our corners and rough sides by this amiable collision." Yet the manners of England, which are the social conventions of her own political organism, are admirably adapted to the island itself. That outside of England they serve little purpose, so that beyond the limits of his own shores the Englishman is always at sea, is not perhaps so serious a fault. But then outside it is that the self-sufficiency, brutal energy, and honest directness come obtrusively to the fore. But in directness and all the useful qualities of honesty and energy and courage and

pluck and singleness of purpose and simplicity that flow from it or are akin to it, where is there a man that can vie with him? In becoming cosmopolitan, he has managed somehow to get a show of manners, learned a craft not quite natural to him, and lost something of his directness and honesty. But though the changes of the last half-century have been so great, he is still a Dorian,— still he scorns deceit and meanness. He hates guilelessness, but equally detests the wily. Evasion and circumlocution are not his habit. Therefore he is not prepared for the often Jesuitical quality of French subtlety, or the as frequent New English characteristic of chicane. If there is one thing he dislikes more than another, it is the uncanny canniness of people who are too clever. Facts and plodding are his province, and no one manipulates facts so well. I see wide fields in the domain of English ethical philosophy and its alien metaphysics opening up if I could but enter on them. So that it takes more facts to convince the island English than any other nation, and the defect of this temperament is the failure to recognize that facts can ever lie. A Frenchman knows this, and always counts upon it. For French finesse the English have no weapons so delicate. And for those New English characteristics, by reason of which Proteus should have altars erected to him in the New English market-places, the alertness, adapt-

ability, buoyancy, or, in their exaggerated forms, bumptiousness and shrewdness and smartness, they have an envious appreciation although they look at times so primly askance, — an appreciation that passes into a positive craving for more matter equally amusing. So "Americans" they have cultivated and flattered and entertained royally, if often in the manner patronising. But not being critics, they have made little distinction between "Americans;" they have not been careful respecters of persons. They ran after the late Mr. Lowell and "Buffalo Bill" with equal energy; and the latter, I am sure, with the greater interest. Both were flattered, and came again. And yet this is so admirably different from the way the Athenians mobbed a philosopher of Megara, who was keenly interested in the great innovator, Socrates, and journeyed once all the way across the Thriasian Plain, and up over the hills through the olive-groves of Attica, to violet-crowned Athens, just to visit him and learn from him. But that was at a time when Megara had no commercial market, and wished in vain for free-trade. It is the immense *ennui* of their routine lives that troubles the English, and makes them rejoice at the freshness of Americans. Americans to the English are a new sensation.

But it is this very habit of convention, and this undeviating routine against which at heart the island Eng-

lish chafe, and by reason of which they are so willing to welcome any manifestation of freedom in others, any evidence of absence of conventional restraint, when they are not asked to be pert nonconformists too, that makes England so fascinating and restful a country to the New Englishman or the Englishman of the Colonies. The Englishman of the New Worlds is like a cat in possessing nine lives and a clever habit of alighting in every fall upon his feet. The Englishman, not because he is too nice and delicate, but because he is not so easily adaptable, being used to one authoritative way of life prescribed by Church, Society, and State, is like glass or flowers, which, when moved, must always be moved "right side up, with care." But American versatility and vivacity are contagious; and every one in the United States is a chameleon. The pitch of American life is at fever heat. Busied in the struggle to live, it becomes a second nature to the American to live fast; and under the strain of the nervous tension he breaks utterly down in health before any of his European neighbours. His aim is not, as often in England, to get money enough to live in such a way as to live well. He does not recognise that the only good of money is to buy leisure to be wise, but, with eye fast fixed upon the coin itself, the dazed vision magnifies it into a good for its own sake. In America, on the whole, money is at present

the chief condition of power. By money man is enabled there to crane himself above the dead level of uniformity. Hence, in general, America has not reached the point that England long ago attained, in which it can afford to cultivate other gods than Mammon. This is, I show farther on, not without its fortunate results; but the unpleasant fact is that with such an ideal and such a cult arise too often sordidness of likings in the worshippers, and mediocrity, if not actual vulgarity, of aspiration,—too often, that is, apart from the narrow-minded university centres of culture and from the sections dominated by piety and the churches. But the piety of the churches, while sincere, is of course quite lacking in culture; whereas in England hypocrisy has often æsthetic or patriotic sanction, and is attended with inviting allurements. New Englishmen thank God that they have "a Church without a bishop, and a State without a king;" so that certain temptations not to think which are natural to England do not there entice. The United States pretends to fewer social shackles and fewer superstitions than any country in the world; but what it has are more galling and oppressive than any in England. "We hold these truths to be self-evident," says its Declaration of Independence, "that all men are created equal." This assertion, as profoundly false as it is profoundly true, pervades all her institu-

tions, and is dangerously *caviare* to the general. For not all Americans have by any means as yet recognised that only men who are equal are equal; that there are degrees of worth, and thus degrees of legitimate superiority, and consequently of desert and social rank, but a rank of which taste ought to be the gauge. The truth in this utterance which they do appreciate is its insistence upon the inalienable right of every man to be himself, and to work out his own salvation, and its rejection of anything like the English notion that the individual must content himself with smiling labour, however arduous, in the lot to which he is called and in which he is born.

But however strong may be the belief throughout the United States of North America in man's inalienable right of liberty, the belief does not appear to have that general vitality we should have expected. The religious and social restrictions that exist there, though infinitely fewer than those in England in the written statute books of the island and in the unwritten laws of the national goddess Respectability and her prophet, are not, like English restrictions, which are for the most part paper conventions, easily ignored in practice, and thus prolific of hypocrisy, but arbitrarily tyrannical formulas of the strictest sort, most unfavourable to the development of individuality, and rendering a special, independent life all

but impossible. This tyranny is not felt so much in the expression of one's political convictions, but it is shamefully exacting in social and religious life. In the rank and file of the churches in New England intolerance is still grievously rife, so that the average Methodist, for instance, or Baptist, could never, even in the covert silence of his own rash musings, logically wish a hateful Unitarian or Universalist in "hell," because his profound belief is quite at one with his professed creed that they are already doomed, and his interest in the matter would be utterly superfluous. In England, where, if Englishmen practised in all sincerity what the Prayer-book preaches, intolerance should be far more general and savage, as a matter of fact it is far less frequent. Indeed, religious intolerance pure and simple may be said scarcely to exist at all, whatever distrust there is of the Nonconformist being distinctly a political affair. But the Prayer-book offers a most convenient code to fall back upon as a means for the inclusive instruction of children and the lower classes. In England, for the most part, servants are born servants, and must die servants, and need not complain, for they are a different race, happy helots in the Spartan realm. In a land where no man is born a servant, or, if he has been, runs the risk some day of being President of his country, it is obvious, and to the English traveller

it will often be painfully, obnoxiously obvious, that there must frequently be a vast deal of prevalent vulgarity in self-assertion, and annoying friction, and loud-mouthed jarring of dissonant advisers. Such is indeed the case in the North America of to-day. But the fact is of the highest significance. In the United States of North America to-day there are more human beings with a growing sense of their own worth as men, more individual human beings with sense of "self," than have ever before been congregated in history. Almost all the deficiencies and disadvantages of these people seem capable of being interpreted as necessary evils; so that at present the undoubted "lack of distinction" which was recorded by the late Matthew Arnold is really a great distinction. The ideal aim of civilisation, it is arguable, is the fullest general development of individuality in all the members of the nation. But the process is painful in a high degree; and a nation in the stress and strain of such development is not a pleasant place for people of delicate organism or too nice nerves to live in. But the critic who, noting the application of this truth to America, stops at the fact without explaining it or determining the prophecy in it, is too lazy to think. It should be pointed out that the unrest, the absence of taste, the reaching after new ideas, the self-assertion, the youthful con-

fidence and bounce, are all inevitable characteristics most likely to be outgrown, unless some cataclysm engulf the entire proud Korah's troop of these States, and swallow them on their far Atlantis, away into oblivion, where Destiny can no longer experiment with them. These States to-day certainly mark a farther general advance in civilisation, however, than has yet been attained. There is a more pervasive individual life there, a greater general power of the imagination, and a higher average individual development, than in any country in the world. But if this be true of the average, the highest quality is much rarer than in England. I hasten to record, however, that the comparison of English and New English history in these respects, recalling as they do the Athens of refinement made possible by slavery, and quite another fact in human development so distinct, so astoundingly distinct, as that of the French Revolution, leaves open the whole problem of the destiny of our civilisation, and not merely what we shall come to be as a race, but what we ought to wish to be, — an even more curious and pressing inquiry still. Off against the wonderful ideal truth that the Revolution of France wrote in blood on the pages of history, stands the other truth taught in the record of the English island, that, in the words of Joubert, *subordination is a better*

*thing than independence.* "Liberty, liberty," he cries, "in all things let us have justice, and we shall have enough liberty." And this has been England. So that with these great contrasts in our minds, how much there is for us to think about, over how much have we to ponder! We almost find the question of the ultimate hope, the ultimate aim, far too involved, too remote, for speculation even; and we return to surer ground in such assertions, for instance, as that in the United States the small remnant is what we should have expected. With more ideas as a nation than the English of the island, if less than the French, the Englishman of America is fortunate in having more self-control than the latter, and more repose. He is more sympathetic and more appreciative than the island Englishman. But, of course, a people waking to a knowledge of itself is not a tractable monster. Its millions of heads mean each a thinking brain liable to entangle its Briarean arms. Here is horror and anarchy in germ. His Holiness the Zeit-Geist seems very foolhardy, it must be owned, to try so uncertain and strange a game.

England, therefore, to a New Englishman is a fair land flowing with milk and honey, where he may rest his tired eyes and weary brain. Here, after all the uproar of his home, is dignity and strength and charm. All the relics of feudalism

exercise upon the foreigner of English blood their spell. All over the land he hears the whispering of immemorial elms. He walks in Druid groves or on the earthworks of Danish camps. It is not the Church alone that is established. Every English institution seems to stand upon a pyramid base that cannot be shaken. All the land is fair, as it rolls, and well tilled to the horizon. Not only is it like a gentleman's park, it is really such, — the playground of grand feudal lords in the pay of Poseidon, who boast in their addresses to their retainers of England's dominion of the sea, and of the glories of her world-encircling commerce, but neglect to mention that, in compensation for these splendid distinctions, England's fruit-trees run a danger of being left to wither, and her fields of going unproductive. Fruit may be had from the Channel Islands, grain from the United States, eggs, chickens, vegetables, from the Continent. The individual English farmer seems doomed. If gentlemen have money to buy products from abroad, their own fields they may polish into parks. Hare and deer, and grouse and pheasant, and wood-pigeon and partridges were all created for the glory of England. Adam, bless him, gave them English names. The foreigner of English blood, however, who is a long time learning this, would be a fool to quarrel with this paradise in which he finds

himself so comfortably at home, and so well treated when he arrives. For England is the prettiest country in the world. The misty air which hovers over it, and on the slightest provocation touches it with softening blue, seems charged with opiates. England, summer England, is a Circe's garden, where the passing traveller never gets even a single revealing whiff from the stagnant pools of slime in the pigsties so carefully hidden. The wind never blows from that quarter, for the air above the heads of imperial England is never troubled; nor is there much circulation or current from below, — the cool, conventional, calm atmosphere of upper England seeming eternally satisfying, nothing heated or mephitic ever rising to insult the too nice nerves of those who dwell above, or send sickening warning of any rottenness beneath. The towers of Westminster grow daily, as one gazes, more and more beautiful. The cabs continue to glide easily and cheaply over noiseless pavements. Your tailor calls you "sir," and never asks for money, and the school-children curtsey as they pass. The moonlight lies with beauty rare upon the grand sweep of the Thames at Richmond, and sleeps upon the meadows by the stream. Windsor, serene, majestic, dominates her park with dignity of far-seen towers. The lanes of Devon wind and wind between their high hedges tangled with dog-

rose in curves of sweetest and most suggestive charm. Still over Bolton Abbey climbs the ivy, while the river, wandering through the peaceful dale, murmurs memories of Wordsworth. Cathedral spires soar, and nightingales sing, and the gardens of Oxford bloom in sweet seclusion, and the live oak grows at Clovelly quite unto the iridescent sea. And who shall say that England is not fair? Against such let her church-bells chime *anathema!* But occasionally there are hateful murmurs, as of rumbling earthquakes, of dock labourers on strike, and occasionally one is forced to listen to an anxious discussion upon Royal Grants; and occasionally one hears the theatre shake with the applause of the people, the English people, sanctioning vociferously the motive of a play teaching, as did the *Middleman*, the truth so rarely true for England, that the labourer is worthy of his hire. Then England takes another hue; and the critic has new light on Isaiah's fulminations and the stern Thucydidean story of the Sicilian expedition.

But meanwhile, till the air begins to circulate much more than at present, they who can afford the *dolce far niente* life will continue to bask in the English fields, and let inconvenient suggestions alone. Thinking is so troublesome and stupid! But the English of the United States, seeing the stress of the growing problem of England, namely, how, in the acceptance

and assimilation of the democratic principle, she shall hasten, without total collapse or serious and chronic disorder, the natural process of transformation, so as to accomplish in one year what should take, the physiologists tell us, seven, need not so speedily congratulate themselves upon their greater good-fortune. The problem there, which is even of higher interest, is no whit less difficult. The responsibility of vindicating democracy will be upon the next half-century of these American men. They think their *raison d'être* is proved. Vain beating of the eagle wings! The second historical era of the world, which began with the discovery of America, is passing into its crisis. And to the responsibility of it in America, as well as in England, but most of all in America, there will be men enough to rise, only so long as they continue clasping their hands below the purse-fold of their gowns, and always looking about to spy whence they may get them gold! As it is, thank fortune, — though I am uttering a paradox that in another place I have explained, — this age in America does not so much differ from the Alexandrian, of which Theocritus wrote that the very rust of the money was too precious to be rubbed off for a gift.

England despises France, and dislikes it because she thinks it given over to bawds and feminine baubles. The healthy Englishman loathes baubles, and,

ows himself to traffic with the former, makes
l business of it, and not a pretty pleasure all
; of musk. Englishmen judge the French
ıeir knowledge of Paris, and Paris from a
ry *cancan*. To a Frenchman's pre-eminent
ility to ideas, his curiosity, his distinction of
ngland turns the deafest of insular ears. Be-
'rance flutters and is versatile, even a larger
en the Philistine England damns it as unstable,
fied, and fickle. The generalising tendency
French, the lightness of their spirit and their
ıy, become to England indications of super-
. Thus, because she has not an atom of
for, and so little knowledge of, France,
institutions, so lacking in the English steadi-
d dignity, her democratic tendencies so vari-
uncertain, her republicanism so idealistic, so
ical, do not appreciably menace England.
is is an important point, that while spiritually
has her power, politically she has been nil.
contrast with the political inefficiency of
is the strong influence of the vast colonial
world. New England, America, Australia,
ver ceased to react most powerfully upon the
Island. From the beginning, down through
n and Emerson and Sir Henry Parkes to the
moment, while America seems to loom over

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the top of the sea, silently but resolutely and certainly as Fate, even as a python insinuates itself into the jungle and enfolds its prey, American and colonial ideals have slowly permeated English life; how slowly indeed in this society so impatient of ideas, and yet after all really and surely! I am not sure if the history of New England be not almost the greatest glory of England. It should surely be a pride of New England that its history is the most characteristic and significant in English history. New England will grow to be content, nay, to rejoice, that, besides to the Lares of its own hearthstone, it is drawn more strongly still to this island beyond the Atlantic sacred as the home of the race,—a sacred isle, more sacred than Delos or Delphi or Pisa to the Greek, a holy ground of relics and symbols and signs and superstitions, touched with the melancholy and charm of the evening light through the western windows of its grand cathedrals; the τέμενος, the ἄλτις, the sacred enclosure, of the inheritors of the tongue of Shakespeare, of Milton, and of Keats, wherever they breathe under the sun.

*February*, 1890.

## II.

A PROPHET of the United States is not without honour save in his own country; but it is entertaining, and, I may add, instructive, to note how much his countrymen's real estimate of him depends upon foreign appreciation, especially that of Englishmen; and therefore how rare is his opportunity for self-congratulation, considering that England has so slight a regard for the foremost men, the poets and prophets, beyond the Atlantic, because so little real knowledge of them.[1] Until to-day, it might almost have been said of North American writers, painters, sculptors, that they required the stamp of European approval in order to attain a recognised place of esteem in North American opinion. This entire region even as yet is not sure of its judgments. But woe to the Englishman who commits the tactless indiscretion of saying that this is so. New Englishmen, however, and their brothers of the West see no reason for humbly impressing their deficiency upon others. While the island Englishman prefers to live in a paradise of imperial pride,—"fool's paradise" though it may be, it is still a paradise, — the American Englishman, with the assurance

[1] "La France a souvent averti les Anglais du mérite de leurs grands hommes," wrote De Fontanes in 1785 to Joubert.

of inexperience, assumes a certainty and omniscience which he is aware is not very well founded, and which can deceive nobody acquainted with a little history and human nature. He may admit, within the privacy of his own geographical boundaries and to other American Englishmen, unsatisfying things about himself and his fellows; but, like the island English in their assertion of their own gift for dominance, he is not possessed of sufficient magnanimity to own the truth to many others who are not of his own kith and kin.

It is amusing to come upon a characteristic such as this, reminiscent of the boyish inflation of the public school, in the attitude and bearing of States when they are forced to throw their shoulders back and toe the line of dignity. "Nescis, mi fili, quam parva cum sapientia regitur mundus:" "You have no idea, my boy, with how little wisdom the world is governed," said Count Oxenstiern, the Chancellor of Sweden, to his son. Behind the conventional and magniloquent phrases of diplomatic correspondence I sometimes think there is a void of intellectual inanity that imposes upon statesmen themselves. A score of adequate illustrations crowd to the point of any unclogged pen in this connection. But the most conspicuous illustration of all it occurs to me to give at the moment, because it will serve also, by the way,

as an all-sufficient proof of the prominence and pervasiveness of the English characteristic of selfishness, in illustration of which I have noted in the preceding portion of these remarks a more trivial instance, that was much questioned when it first appeared.

Never has England's selfishness, her constant practical belief in the truth of the principle of Natural Selection, and her confidence that the working of this theory may be facilitated by jealous attention to one's own resources, — God helping those who help themselves, — been more effectively demonstrable than in the whole history of her relations with her colonies. She has believed that the race is indeed to the swiftest, and the battle to the strongest, and bread to the worldly-wise; and she has seen that the best way to prove this is to win by being universally competent herself. But in statecraft, as in the selling of eggs, there may be a wisdom of the penny and the foolishness of the pound. In this one conspicuous particular such fiscal demoralisation and folly have almost always marked the policy of the usually so honest and fair-minded England. What her ministers ought always to have done in regard to colonial affairs, that is, in regard to foreign affairs that were really home affairs, was to bend all their energies to hoodwinking the people. She should have made her children useful to her, and at the same time concealed from

them their subjection. What actually she has usually succeeded in doing is either to apply the chastising rod, or else to show in regard to her offspring an unnatural indifference. Hence the cultivation of that spirit of alienation in the colonies which a century ago wrested from England the United States in North America, and which seems liable to disintegrate her larger empire of this nineteenth century. Ordinarily any proper working theory of diplomacy depends upon a practical application to human nature of the eternal principal of the Conservation of Energy; action, that is, without speech, *faire sans dire.* But what shall we say of a people who, in the first place, have from sheer indifference neglected their duty for so long a time that the policy of *faire sans dire* is on many problems now impracticable, and who now fail to take the only course left open to them, that of a generous interest and sympathy, which shall uproot all falsity of pride? By such careless indifference to-day England runs the risk of losing a splendid empire.[1]

The revolution of the English colonies in America would seem to have taught England nothing. The enormity of English stupidity in matters of this sort is a crime against sanity which will almost tolerate

[1] Cf. the whole series of Burke's studies on the American Revolution, especially the "Address to the King."

extravagant figures to describe it. What pathos in her frantic endeavours to bite off her own nose! She betrays dangerous symptoms of growing cataract, impairing clearness of vision. Her statesmen need a course in moral geometry and ethical conic sections, to learn how to plot outward, into regions that just as intimately concern them beyond their shores, the projection of certain admirably straight lines and principles which they readily enough apply to themselves and to the people for whom they legislate in their own island. As long ago as the time of Edward I. the decree *De tallagio non concedendo* settled that no tax or impost should be levied without the joint consent of the Lords and Commons. In England itself this has been a much-admired principle for centuries, and out of it grew the principle of no taxation without representation. But violation of the spirit of this decree lost to the mother country the American colonies. England did not see at the time, and she does not now wholly see, that her sons are her sons though seas divide them. How fond the island Englishmen are of facts, and how well they manipulate them, I have elsewhere stated. "The English now and then produce a learned creature like a thistle, prickly with all facts, and incapable of all fruit." But apparently England is the Doubting Thomas of the nations, who believes in no facts but those which can literally

be handled, — such, for instance, as produce the clannish barbaric warfare that often exists for generations between families, over merely a disputed ell of real estate, — or else facts that can be seen in closest perspective. If this were not true, she would be more alive to the stress of the present time.

The North American Revolution was as truly a civil war as the War of Secession in the United States of America or the great Cromwellian outbreak of that name in England. George III. thought it the revolt of a dependency. It is a fallacy, however, that has been too long held to imagine that the American colonies proved their right to a separate existence by virtue of their success. The legitimacy of the struggle lay in its character as a fight for equity of rights. New Englishmen happened to have a temper more English than that of their domineering elder brothers on the soil of the old home, and they were more keenly alive to any derogation from their rights. Like the Plaza-Toro family in Mr. Gilbert's *Gondoliers*, they did not "demand" until they had first "sought" and "desired" equality of recognition at court with the other portions of the state. When that freedom and equality were denied them by an ignorant and indifferent government, then was born their right to fight to the bitter end. But, of course, the issue of individual existence, be-

yond that of local self-government, was by no means "constitutional," or anything but revolutionary. As self-respecting Englishmen, their only course was a protracted obstinacy. But the spirit of final compromise which usually stands Englishmen in such good stead just at the last moment, forsook at this crisis those who lived at home, and the wrongheadedness of Lord North's government dropped the insolent iron hand of coercion upon a people very much more English than the Englishmen who were then in the majority in Parliament. Had it not been for an estranging sea, too wide to be traversed by the unsympathetic, selfish gaze of England, Englishmen would have seen that they were putting their feet upon the necks of brothers, and that it was time to change the character they were playing to that of Sir Giles Fairplay, which suits them so much better. Here was an object-lesson that would have been large enough for all but English eyes. But it was not learned by the English of America any more than, as we see ample proofs today, it has been learned in England. As a civil war, the North American Revolution was inevitable; as a war of independence, it was at the time a geographical necessity. The Civil War in the United States of North America discussed, with the argument of bullets, practically the same question; namely, the rights enjoyed by people possessed of local self-government,

and the duties incumbent upon them. The right of the Southern States to secession was certainly much more plausible than that of the original New English colonies to secede; for the national integrity depended originally upon a voluntary compact. The exact nature of State-rights and the Union was far less quickly and certainly determinable, and the individual independence of the several States was really, as some of the Border States[1] clearly saw, an arguable question; whereas that of the colonies was not, until a stupid policy drew a line wider than the ocean between the home island and that part of England in America. As society is constituted, the error of the South in the Union of the North American States was in not adopting constitutional methods, and in precipitating the war before all other means had been tried. The North scarcely realised how divergent its own political development and that of the slave States had rapidly come to be. Many of the natural political English tendencies, in particular those making towards the democratic principle, were arrested and all but destroyed by atrophy throughout the entire South of the slaves, and the community became less and less intelligible to the more consistent members of the Puritan or Quaker North who had maintained

[1] Kentucky, for instance, at first, in its attitude of neutrality, in which President Lincoln acquiesced.

and cultivated the old English tradition. Fortunately for both the North and the South in America, there were no natural barriers of mountain or dim stretches of vague sea to solve with hopeless disruption, as with the irony of a fate that puts to scorn all human intervention, a question in which the anxious discussions of men were vain, and their actual warfare impotently sublime and pathetic folly. Marriages of States, obviously, save on the shores of the Adriatic, are made in heaven; at all events not always by the orthodox appointed ministers on earth.

This entire significant episode in history is largely explained by the fact that the characteristic blinding English selfishness, which sometimes looks so hopeless, got the upper hand of the English habit of final compromise, which is almost as characteristic. As has been said before, from the dominance of this principle, which destroyed her insight and injured her sense of perspective, she has suffered much chagrin. That even thus the whole injury she does herself is not told, but that in general this selfishness even distorts her judgment, I lately noted entertainingly illustrated by a mural tablet placed between two nondescript Indians in Westminster Abbey, who hold upon their heads a piece of sculpture erected to the memory of an Hon. Lieut.-Colonel Roger Townshend, killed by a cannon-ball on the 25th of July, 1759, as

he was reconnoitring the French lines at Ticonderoga. This slab enrolls the Hon. Lieut.-Colonel Roger Townshend "with the names of those immortal statesmen and commanders whose wisdom and intrepidity in the cause of this comprehensive and successful war have extended the commerce, enlarged the dominions, and upheld the majesty of these kingdoms beyond the idea of any former age." Oh, shades of Alexander and Napoleon, what can one say more? Really, we English do need an Academy, after all. For notwithstanding the internal evidence of the style, there is surely no reason to suppose that the Hon. Lieut.-Colonel Roger Townshend, one of the immortals of this war which *upheld the majesty* of this British empire *beyond the idea of any former age*, is a mythical creature or a demigod. For Fort Ticonderoga still stands, the most imposing military ruin in America, — I speak under correction here, — and across its western barracks the sun sets full upon its brown and crumbling stone, adorned when once I saw it with a truly nineteenth century legend in the staring white letters of somebody's "Stove Polish." This legend attests at all events a certain reality to the cycle of stories clustering about the ruin. But Ticonderoga is not only a monument to American vulgarity. It is also a warning to Englishmen, almost as significant as their painful memories of Manipur, of the fatality

lurking in their short-sighted selfishness and in the practical lack of perspective I have mentioned. They should see to it that amid "the long wash of Australasian seas" there arise not another Ticonderoga as significant. For they still have it in their power, at this period of rapidly extending intercommunication, when seas no longer divide as they once did in the earlier time when Englishmen in America laid the foundations of their new American state, to seize the event, and, securing for themselves and their posterity a harmonious and federated empire, to seal for some time the issue of the future.

Is it not a pity that the inflation and boastfulness of which mention has been made, arising partly from a sense of their own deficiencies, should be so rife among Englishmen all over the world, and especially among Englishmen in America? For it is unnecessary. A talent of appreciation is much more natural to the people of the United States than to the island English. But criticism, of course, however much it fulfils its function by being simply a faithful recording of impressions or as a sympathetic interpretation, is at least the ability to know a good thing when one sees it. Yet the feeling of the courage of one's convictions, while always a moral characteristic in a person of artistic genius or special abilities, unfortunately may exist quite apart from critical insight or

intellectual cleverness. Much of the unadulterated strain of English blood in America, and certain other sections of charming and appreciative people not English, still possess this steadiness and poise which I have elsewhere called moral inertia, and are quite free from the vulgar "bounce" and boastfulness. But these are clearly no longer the dominant classes in American life. Democratic institutions have tended to their disfranchisement. The remnant, possessing a refined tradition of manners and of ideas, and endowed hereditarily with the love of whatsoever things are noble and of good report, — people certainly having in their composition a positive basis for looking at things critically as they are, — comparatively speaking, is very small. Not unlike the vanishing class of the Faubourg St. Germain in Paris, with which, however, it has nothing else in common, it lives in as unobtrusive an alienation as possible in the midst of a vast number of good-natured and commonplace vulgarians who are the heirs of the future. Its function is the tending of the vestal fires. It is a dethroned aristocracy, beyond any question more exclusive than the aristocracy of England. Levites of the *arcana* of the best in American life, their own self-preservation almost demands their isolation. Their condition is pathetic, were it not so enviable, in the distinction attaching to their sacred obligation of preserving the

national records and keeping the fires alight. At times they half believe they prefer the "stinking breath" and the "sweaty nightcap" of the rampant democracy fast developing in England, to the exasperating habit of *gaucherie* manifested in every gesture by people given only to pennies, psalms, or platitudes. For though the gap between the higher and the lower in England is yearly narrowing, still there is a pleasant deference and that habit of respect which leads to ease of living there. In the States of North America and, I am told, in the English colonies as well, the presumptuous familiarity of manner, born usually of the very kindest and most unselfish feelings, is extremely irritating, and none the less so for the merit of its origin. American *bonhomie* seems to be an endeavour to be one thing to all men. This is not at all the same thing as being all things to all men. The Pauline diplomacy is an ideal that neither England nor America has reached. The self-centred indifference of island Englishmen is as unfavourable to this ideal as the hearty abandon of indiscriminate intimacy that marks the American type of Englishman. The Christian conception of the fellowship of mankind and love of one's neighbour has become far riper in America than in England, and it is usually more genuine when it exists. But there is very little of the early spirit of this much-prized Christianity in

either country. By both countries Jesus is the most discussed, but the least understood, person in history. In the United States people are often wooed to churches where they are told nine times what Paul said to once what Jesus said, and their attendance is won by theatrical devices which in England are thought very bad taste indeed. But listeners once won are undoubtedly for the most part more intellectually entertained and rationally stirred by the sermon than church-goers in England. Except in the Episcopal Church, so called, which is in America only a sect among others more significant, the same interest does not attach to the rest of the service other than the sermon. But the average ability of New English or even all the North American clergy is in advance of the average ability of the same class in England. In comparison with the stern, highly elaborated tutelage of the New English clergy, the training and circumstances of the clergy in England under the Establishment have been lax and demoralising. The result has been in New England a stronger moral fibre, but a learning adapted to less humane ends, and in general a deeper but less broad intellectual achievement. "The religion most prevalent in our northern colonies," said Burke, in his speech on Conciliation with America, "is a refinement on the principle of resistance; it is the dissidence of dissent, and the

protestantism of the Protestant religion." The elet ment of life transplanted in the first two centuries beyond the Atlantic was an invigorating principle from the marrow of the English backbone. This protestantism of the Protestant religion gave integrity and vitality of latent energy which assured continuous and, on the whole, healthy development to a people caring less for artistic grace than the grace of God. It was a Puritanism radically the same that was accountable for the historical life of the Israelites and of early Rome. Concerted action and a unanimous and patriotic pride in their own national life, based on sublimity of conceit in their own special god, have characterized all great peoples before the urbanity of their decadence. But the special English strength of the early New Englishman has largely disappeared. Yet in the advance towards *disillusionment*, to which every people tends, the North Americans, placed, geographically speaking, eccentrically off the focal centre of European influence, have got only to the precipitous edge of the gulf of despair; but that they are even in its neighbourhood they are utterly unconscious. What facts and elements may come to retard this result, nay, what already exist, I am not for the moment concerned to consider; but there they are now at least, for better or worse. The modern New Englishmen and the Englishmen of the Western States keep the intellectual

expression of their ancestors' faith, and of most of their points of view, but they are not inspired with the old indomitable confidence in a vital reality behind the expressions. England has undergone and is now undergoing a *disillusionment* as revolutionary as that of France, but, as its habit is, it takes the change more decorously. An Englishman never tells all he knows, and much less frequently all he feels. But his sanity and reticence in matters of religion should not be allowed to hide the fact of this tremendous and pervasive subterranean change. The cloak of his hypocrisy may in time not far distant cover America. But there it can never so effectually hide the gestures underneath as in England. Perhaps it is because the mantle is so ample and always has been ample, thus affording opportunities of quieter consideration of what will be the best way, when changes threaten, to adapt oneself to the new order of the time, that England's history has been so continuously expansive along the line of liberty, and that only in rare instances have events come to birth prematurely, or found the larger part of the state unprepared for them. Of this truth the first two centuries of New English history — almost the most characteristic, as I have elsewhere said, in English history — offer conspicuous proof. But neither the New England of to-day, nor any body of men in America, can be cited to this end. New England has

almost outlived the name. Its boundaries are now holding many another race. As democracy advances in England, and other nations more and more rub shoulders against the Englishman on the sacred soil of the paradise of his own patrimony, Englishmen will gradually take the American hue. Still insular, how fast is the Englishman becoming cosmopolitan and democratic; and how odd that he should not realize that his way has before been trodden by the New Englishman.

The form which England's worldly wisdom has taken is a perfectly natural result of her geographical position. For some centuries she has sat in the seat of customs. Stormed by the battering of these northern seas, England's rock has risen in the very highway of the waves of largest international influence. Her reticence, her selfishness, were needed for her self-preservation. Everything, she knew, would come to her in time. Hence her dignity and patience in the best type of her sons, and in her worst the narrow horizon of her mind, her brutal self-sufficiency and coarse, pugnacious energy, born of an ignorance always eager to die in order to save its prejudices. No brutality, no coarseness, is so odious as English coarseness. Little of this was transplanted to America, however, to the home now of mediocrity and the common. Always through the centuries the best type

of Englishman, both in England and New England, has had in quite unaccountable haphazard fashion visions of the *flammantia mœnia mundi.* The calm, slow, conservative Englishman, given to sleeping in Authority and dreaming of the past, is not the only, though he is the average and the passing, type. There have always been a saving few given to the cultivation of variations from the original stock, and the courageous pursuit of deviating and eccentric humours. In the open play of discussion which has been possible in England, how often have flashes of seminal and illuminating thought been struck out in the interests of Truth, and how rarely elsewhere has the light been brighter! But the flaming boundaries of the worlds have scarcely been kenned more resolutely in this island than by single-eyed observers on New English hilltops, through many a calm long night of the first two centuries of their history. All this is a fact unknown in the insular mother island. Now things are not quite the same. Englishmen, educated wisely for generations in liberty and self-reliance, and amidst that collection of rights called free institutions, were able in America to work out their own salvation without even the amount of fear and trembling that is prescribed and that one might have thought necessary. Suddenly, however, representatives of races without the habits of self-reliance, and unpractised

in the technique of practical government, invade the country, and the first scientific result is a swamping tidal-wave.

It is a commonplace to say that it makes a vast difference whether democracy grows up naturally from within, or is imported from without as an idea to be engrafted. But the commonplaces are so often forgotten. It makes a large part of the difference, indeed, between France and England, between England and the modern United States, between the first two centuries of American national life and the last half century of that life. America of the last thirty or forty years bears scarcely any resemblance to the original English New England. She has taken a step from which now there is no going back. She is selling her original birthright for a conglomerate mess of pottage, in which "Irish stew," mulligatawny soup, corn-bread, "sauer-kraut," and "lager beer" are staple ingredients. The modern America of the States is entering upon certain social problems absolutely new to it. These problems must be settled by methods for which she will not be able to find any precedent in her English traditions. For her earlier history, indeed almost for the first two centuries of her history, the phenomena with which she had to deal were distinct, definite, what the scientists call isolated, and therefore comparatively simple. The complicated

tangle of those that now exist is so very perplexing that she may well tremble at the problem of unravelling them. At the start she was forced, for her very life, to eject elements of hostility which threatened her existence. Among such the Quakers have a plain tale of intolerance manifested towards them, for instance, to cite in proof. But for the most part during this period in America nothing impeded her growth; and with such blood in her veins, no wonder she succeeded. Liberty, planted in a soil that was unchoked by any weeds of an older time — the feudal growth that in England was so deep-rooted — grew to quick maturity. But just for this reason the establishment of national unity and republican government was not quite so remarkable an achievement at the time as to-day they seem. The difficulties of Frenchmen in the solution of their problem, which only to a superficial view can possibly appear the same as the American, and was and is in reality radically different, are worth noting in comparison. Two generations passed between the protective and feudal age of Louis XIV. and the astounding Revolution, and meanwhile almost every eminent Frenchman, formerly having thought England barbarian, came to this island of liberty of thought. Voltaire introduced to France Locke, Newton, and Shakespeare. "Until Voltaire had got to know England by his travels and friend-

ship," says Cousin, "he was not Voltaire." The effect of these leaders of light was that of an awakening spark. We know the story; but in the flame and the fire many traditions were untouched and many affections went unscorched. They had only disappeared for a time from view in the smoke of the conflagration. In some the love of the old *régime*, and in others the force of a cowering habit, were here and there asbestos in the fire. "I 'd rather be a Stuart bastard than a legitimate Guelph," a friend once said to me. It was a kind of sentiment like this that pervaded France and still is not unknown there. Moreover, a people is always impressed by mystery, and cares for what it does not or cannot possess, as well as to recall what the fathers enjoyed in "the good old times." And it is against this host of prejudices, affections, predispositions, that liberty has had to make its way in France. A people denied the experience of self-government is almost sure to go mad if inflamed with an abstract idea of liberty, equality, fraternity, for which it is not ripe. Constitutional government in England has been self-government in leading-strings. The early colonists in America were largely Englishmen, with all the English training, who believed that under favourable conditions the leading-strings could be snapped. They were perfectly right. But they who have builded the house no longer sit at the

head of the table, and all about the board is a motley throng. What is to be the nature of the remaining courses of the banquet or the quality of the after-dinner wine and speeches, he must be either a clever schoolboy or a wise prophet to suggest.[1]

[1] Perhaps the deadlock of business recently in the American House of Representatives, nominally over the question of a quorum, may indicate to some extent the lines along which data may be collected for the prophetic generalisation. The episode was not a pleasant one. It tested nothing, but it revealed weaknesses. It showed, among other things, how bitter still is sectional prejudice, and how keen still the sense of sovereignty among the Southern States. Moreover, it illustrated on a large scale an important point that Mr. Bagehot was always making, — the greater working efficiency of the parliamentary form of government over the presidential in its union of the executive and legislative functions. Is it to be hoped that this American episode is the rapid retrogression that it seems away from the idea of centralisation of power, and the delegation of authority to the lower House? A crisis such as this, however, if overcome quietly and calmly settled, must tend to the establishment of government on a more solid basis. The English cabinet, which is simply a governing committee of presumably the most wisely chosen representatives of the dominant party, has made the actual business of government and the legislative will of the party in power almost identical. This is an ideal yet to be attained in the less simple system of the government of the United States. Whether this is a desirable ideal, however, is an important and interesting matter for discussion. No one has written more ably upon this subject than Mr. A. Lawrence Lowell, in his "Essays on Government," Boston, 1889.

But it is unfortunate, I admit, to be reminded again, and just at this moment, of the remark of Count Oxenstiern, "You have no idea, my boy, with how little wisdom the world is governed."

MAY, 1890.

# DEMOCRACY, WITH REFERENCE TO A RECENT BOOK.

# DEMOCRACY, WITH REFERENCE TO A RECENT BOOK.

WHAT is the greatest name in the world? What word responds to the most inclusive thought of the time?

Surely it is this: *Democracy.* The word "Catholicism" has a renowned echo in the world. No observer of the moment will refuse to Pope Leo XIII. the distinction that is his. The Holy See is still perhaps as well able to take care of itself as ever. Once all eyes turned to Rome with superstitious adoration; for centuries the Pope nearly hypnotised the world. To-day in Catholicism there is not quite the same power of attraction, the same glory, the same prestige. But the Catholic Church, — the Church which is after all, historically, *The Church,* — driven for mere self-preservation to a new opportunism, a fresh political wisdom, is recovering again, for a time at least, its ground. It is bending on its oars with an unexpected vigour. So men pull with a winning — or a losing! —stake in sight. And although one sees in the near future — perhaps a future so near as the end of the twentieth century — the rock of St. Peter, cracked, though not

shattered, yet more venerable always and picturesque than any of the foundations on which the post-Reformation religious sects have raised the symbols and temples of their faith, while in the unsightly clefts the lichens begin to encroach, as long ago they did on the Doric flutings of dead Apollo's shrine at Bassæ, still, to-day there is no obvious sign of the change, to-day, at least, *the Church* is holding its own — and more!

Why is this renewed vitality, this undiminished and lusty life? Because, simply because, it has burned the old standards, and raised another of a bunting woven in nineteenth-century looms. It has lifted the standard of Democracy. Pope Leo XIII. has himself given the cue in memorable words.[1] It is not seemly — the application was to France and the Royalists — that the Church should direct its loyalty to more than one corpse.

The fittest survives on this planet. But the fittest survives only in obedience to the laws of this planet, of this whole mysterious system in the network of the complications of which we find ourselves prisoners with the sweet illusion that we are free. To ignore the arrangement of things is the courageous privilege of an idealist, of a Ravachol, but not of a discreet,

[1] The exact words of Leo XIII. as spoken to Monsieur de Blowitz were: *L'Église du Christ ne s'attache qu'à un seul cadavre, à celui qui est lui-même attaché sur la croix.*

time-serving man, not of the opportunist. And *The Church*, in its alliance with Democracy, is showing itself more in and of the world than ever. So, that it will survive yet for a fruitful while one may be sure: it has based its hope upon the greatest of all names; it is making the cause of the people its own.

Yes, Democracy is the greatest name in the world; and the entertainment which the advance of the ideas for which it stands offers to the critic is so exhilarating as almost to imperil his steadiness of vision. To be fully abreast of one's time,—an achievement which Goethe thought enough to make a man a genius,—is to-day beyond the opportunity of even so fortunately placed an observer as a pope. Not even can Leo XIII., who, for the pleasure of criticism, is the most privileged prisoner on the planet, hope to sum up the entire moment; not even he can venture to plot the curve of the developing Democracy. But the great thing is that he has seen the nature of the problem, and where lies the safety of the venerable interests dear to him. Could there be any doubt, indeed, that the word "Democracy" covers vaguely a host of facts belonging to the most interesting series now at the critical disposal of an observing man, the right-about-face of Catholicism just the other day in France would be conclusive evidence: so much confidence has *The Church* taught us to have in her worldly wisdom!

It is of the latest serious attempt to interpret to us the meaning of this word so often on our lips to-day, Laveleye's *Le Gouvernement dans la Démocratie*,[1] that I am now going to speak. We have not the book as yet in English. But in Europe, as of all that Laveleye did, one hears about it a great deal. Perhaps readers care about him there too much. But it is worth while, I believe, as often as possible to interest ourselves in what other people are saying on those matters of which we too are thinking. The process is invigorating and widening; it is a good thing for our prejudices.

A new book by Laveleye was always a pleasure, but never a surprise. Few writers devoting themselves to large, yet after all special and limited, themes have adopted at once so many of the good, and some of the attractive but unfortunate, intellectual methods of our age. There have been times, one likes to think, when men have had no thought for the morrow; when they have cared only to satisfy their own sense of perfection, letting all other ends take care of themselves; when they have been willing to risk being forestalled, so only they might be left sincerely to follow their own bent in their own leisurely way. At our exciting moment of to-day the temptation to be immediately heard leads so

[1] Le Gouvernement dans la Démocratie, par Émile de Laveleye. Vols. 2. Paris: Félix Alcan, 1891. pp. 664.

many of us, on the contrary, into the strenuous company of those who speak long and overloudly, because it seems a kind of duty to anticipate our neighbours. And Laveleye often yielded to this temptation; he rarely failed to let us all feel that he did not intend to be left out in the cold. His work, naturally, suffered from these conditions; it almost always showed signs of impatience. His thousands of pages were often put forth unedited, so often even unindexed, when the index would have given really so very little trouble. Yet certainly it is at the loss of a number of very superior merits in our work that we make up our minds to be in a hurry. Moreover, if a writer is convinced that at any cost he must be encyclopædic, lest somebody should catch him napping, is it not the choosing of some inferior pleasures for others that are really higher? How can the fact of the possession of a large horizon in intellectual matters ever, of itself, make up for constantly obtruding evidences of a certain indifference to the presence of spaces of untilled ground here and there within its magnificent sweep?

Yet, although Laveleye's work is lacking in unity, in force, in convincingness, it can never fail to be delightfully suggestive for readers open-eyed; for, as I said, he reflects most of the good, and some of the bad, of this particular moment. Suggestive, delightfully suggestive, the moment is, but its great-

est admirers will scarcely deny that it is wanting in unity and in force. Of all this, Laveleye's last book must henceforward bring continuous pathetic proof. And yet to love to generalise, to possess, as a part of one's temperament, that kind of gift of imagination that makes generalisation possible and a pleasure, and to subordinate facts to this gift, this habit, while still liking them in themselves, is not common; and it is common, least of all, in the English temper. So that this suggestiveness of Laveleye is in itself, at this time, really a distinguished merit, and of value for English writers for instruction. And while his work has so much of so distinguished a quality, if it had not also the unworthy impatience it would appeal to us as more compact, more philosophical, more enduring. It was this impatience that allowed him to be self-contradictory with surprising frequency; because of this he often raised foot-notes to the dignity of chapters; because of this, too, he went on repeating himself, and too often only compiling without sorting, just as the farmer of the New Testament parable garnered crops of excellent grain merely for storage into barns. Yet criticism such as this undoubtedly has a slightly troubled conscience; for Laveleye had read so much, and really had knowledge of so many things, and after all did in some, indeed in many, respects his own particular task so surprisingly well,—when one thinks

of the complexity of the subjects, — and he was usually so helpful, letting his thought play freely and very widely, that it would be a pity not to say enough positively in praise to keep all the lines of perspective true. But criticism, surely, must always hold up the ideal perfection; and to secure an audience, moreover, Laveleye's work does not need any man's approval. It is already popularly thought to be too important a fact. He long ago secured his large and judicious circle of readers, who will still listen to him in any circumstances, whatever any one of us may say, whether in censure or in praise.

Laveleye's too impressive lack of method, however, and his very modern lack of force and unity have not detracted from the fine superior characteristic in him of suggestiveness, and therefore from what might be called, in so difficult a theme as was his latest, the almost stirring interest of his book on Democracy. When it is admitted once and for all that a book like this would have been in many respects an ideal in its kind for the official head of the old Alexandrian Library, certainly the author's dearest friends cannot expect of the class of his more detached readers keener appreciation of his value. These other merits — individuality, originality, force — are not necessary merits of encyclopædic works, and why should they be looked for? If Laveleye were ever dull, he really might be

called the Pausanias of constitutional achievements. As he is, he is very entertaining and usually luminous, with a great talent for appreciating sanely things that exist, and he always seems surprisingly complete, impartial. Perhaps we should be greedy to demand more; to ask, for instance, for the clairvoyant things that please us in De Tocqueville, or the clear method, the science, or the really critical sense of a Bagehot.

So this last work of Laveleye will always be a useful book. He set himself there to say all that was to be said on what is undoubtedly the timeliest of themes, and a writer wedded as he was to history could scarcely have said more than he said. To facts he clung very nearly always. He was aware of approximately all that has been written wisely on these interesting matters. He was quite wonderfully up to date. In France, save M. Boutmy, who is there that has kept careful pace with all the political facts of the time? In England, before Bagehot, who was there that knew at once really accurately and comprehensively much about the immense cluster of political facts in the United States of North America, for instance, in their unexplored suggestiveness for students of Democracy? Then came Mr. Bryce and compiled his thesaurus, his encyclopædia, revealing to a host of inattentive scientists the absorbing significance of this class of American facts. But of this undiscovered

country, so valuable for research, — from which, however, sooner or later all travellers return, — Laveleye knew more, apparently, than any other European. He did not, I think, know enough, nor did he know much more than the rest of us do about Australia. But in all other countries he appreciated the democratic movement from the point of view of history as no one had done hitherto. Yet the breaks in his vision were serious, and they limit the value of his last book too definitely in essential things to pass unnoticed. He is very discreet, not daring to prophesy what will happen some day and soon. Yet more venturesome attempts to form a "political science" would have been tolerable. For, structural conditions — conditions, I mean, of this very moment — he exactly defines. But there is a whole rather interminable network of significant psychologic facts, spiritual facts, mechanical facts, even now existing, although new with our age, which have begun to modify all the conclusions to be drawn from the somewhat stale teachings of history of which students have always been so fond, and which, if carefully disentangled and scanned, would give such students a positive enthusiasm for scientific prophecy, — a prophecy in which, without cynicism, we should be willing enough to watch them indulge. Yet upon none of these did Laveleye insist, and few of them has he recorded. This class of facts, everywhere visible

to-day, is, it is true, everywhere save in the Americas, in South Africa, and in Australia, rather intangible, indeed all but hopelessly complicated, so that it is not easily determinable. But in Australia and at the Cape and in the United States of North America, for instance, many of them, after all, are so clear and obvious that they may be said almost to advertise themselves, so that even he who runs may read; and it is just these facts which at our time a writer on "Democracy" ought to try to press into his service and to question. Even at the risk of being thought unscientific, Utopian, there was here an enviable opportunity, to be had only for the searching. Henceforth few of the deductions of history will much help us in plotting the curves of the developing Democracy. Such deductions will still for some time have a great bearing on the problem as it may be studied in England, and on the continent of Europe a closer bearing still; but in comparison none whatever, I repeat, though with some exaggeration, in the United States of North America, for there is the entire overwhelming series of new facts and new conditions which are positively modifying the individual man. To say that this train of thought was unknown to Laveleye would be untrue. He gave many intimations that he was partially aware of this change which is so radical: this was shown in his way of talking about the South

American States in comparison with the spirit of the things he said about the great Republic in North America; but these remarks were, after all, only intimations, and perhaps he magnanimously, rather sadly withal, rejected his chance, preferring always to be strictly historical. However this may be, he neglected an opportunity, and his main deductions, his most original suggestions, were usually in regard to the modern France, which is, of course, after the two great countries already named, the chief centre of amusement just now to students of political science, and a country which undoubtedly, it may be said, he knew much better than others more remote.

About modern France, indeed, how excellent in this last book he often is! Take this which is so much at one with all he has to say about the value of Puritanism in England, — and Laveleye loved Puritanism, — about that Puritanism which has been the great leaven of independency in religion: —

"If France had not persecuted, massacred, and exiled those of her children who became converts to Protestantism, she would have developed those germs of liberty and of self-government which had been preserved in the provincial States."

This is not a new idea, — although would it were even older, and better known, — but Laveleye was always putting this idea opposite a new light and

insisting upon it; and to us Englishmen, or New Englishmen, who are so apt to suppose that it is among us, alone of modern peoples, that the germs of liberty have existed, on account of some radical superiority which in a way gives us a kind of divine right to domination, it is a real service to have this fact so constantly recalled. But Laveleye went on: —

"France suffers still frightful results from St. Bartholomew and the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, those two great blows at liberty of conscience. The thing most wanting in France is men who, without breaking with tradition, shall nevertheless accept the new ideas. The republicans are usually hostile or indifferent to every religious idea, and, like their ancestors the revolutionists of the last century, they lack a basis on which to build a solid structure. Those who defend religious ideas wish to revive the *ancien régime*, and are obstacles in the way of reform."

Or take this in specific reference to two or three of the political forms in which the amiable defects of the French people find expression, — this people so given to not looking before they leap, so much do they love partial glimpses of ideas-in-themselves, and so lacking are they in a pertinacious science: —

"The misfortune of France is that, pursuing liberty with passion, she has never desired to take the road that leads thither. She has destroyed independent bodies, annihilated local autonomies, centralised all functions, accorded all power to irresponsible agents, rendered impossible all

legal resistance, and raised thus a colossus who absorbs all the national life, and who, drunk with his omnipotence, has too often brought the country to its destruction. France does not hesitate to overthrow dynasties, she does not dare to make up her mind to restrain the exorbitant prerogatives of power which provoke these incessant revolutions; on the contrary, after each crisis she increases them, thinking thus better to assure the stability of political institutions. It is time to return from this mistake; the sphere of action of the sovereign power must be restrained in every way, by cutting up the administration into independent services which shall not be hierarchical, by re-establishing political institutions, and by powerfully arming citizens against the arbitrary encroachment of functionaries. Then only will the name of the Republic become synonymous with that of liberty."

A solution, a brave solution! But this solution, however logical, and plausible as it is, must not be taken immediately as ultimate. So we might take it, and with assurance, were it not that we are living in the "nineteenth century" and at its close; that this means the whole vague series of new facts — psychologic, spiritual, mechanical — of which I have been speaking as now beginning their work in renovation of the modern man, and in the negativing of the old historical teachings of analogy; and were it not that in general all these fresh moments of time are to be studied by "political scientists" on their own merits, as the expression is, and within their own conditions. And

thus it is reasonable to suggest that perhaps this solution, so suitable apparently at the moment, needs not after all be applied in France, because there may be reasons why in that country the nation, in its progress ahead of the new causes and amid the fresh conditions named, may outstrip the necessity for it, discovering thus new and unexpected safeguards against the threatened dangers, and securing safety even while preserving, and indeed increasing, the impulse which is more natural to Frenchmen towards unity and centralisation. And furthermore it is equally reasonable to suggest that perhaps to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, for reasons quite different,—the entire nations of these islands not being as yet so impressible by these new causes and fresh conditions,—this solution of a particular kind has a more pressing plausibility. Yet, after all, the passage quoted is excellent, though the reservations are important, and hint that politics is very difficult if treated as a science. They are at least too important for Laveleye to have asserted so categorically in another place that under all conditions "the autonomy of provinces is the citadel of liberty," and then, backed by this generalisation, to have said, as he did elsewhere:—

"Closing their eyes to the clearest teachings of history, French republicans do not wish at any price for provincial autonomies; and yet without them the Republic is only a

vain word, and it will with difficulty succeed in maintaining itself."

Laveleye is to my mind much more critical, and less in need of being fenced about by reservation, when he writes as follows about the slower social evolution of England certain things which history may legitimately be left to teach him, for he is referring to changes which, whether they will or not take place in the way he names, in any case must occur (saving only the hope that always resides in "intervention by the state") before the new political facts to which I am always alluding as liable to vitiate the best-conceived panaceas derived from history, can seriously complicate the problem.

"In England," he says, "where property is centred in the hands of a small number of families, where labourers in the field are shut out from the possession of the soil they cultivate, where the innumerable masses of industrial labourers have declared war on their masters, where finally the fact of inequality is becoming patent to all eyes, the danger [of social explosion, taking some such practical direction as seizure of the land and a fresh division of it] is greater. The rural labourer is not as yet aroused by aspirations for equality, workmen in the towns are not accustomed to arms, nor have they the revolutionary tradition, and the average middle-class citizen,[1] strengthened by party struggle and by self-government, will know better than elsewhere how to defend himself. But these conditions will

[1] La bourgeoisie.

not last. Suppose that in some years, when ideas of social re-organisation shall have invaded the whole working class, a great war breaks out, stopping commerce and closing the workshops; the consequences might be frightful, for the social revolution would not be limited to the capital, as in France, it would extend like a fire to the manufacturing towns and the fields, and would have but one end to pursue, namely, to place property in the hands of all."

This "frightful" prospect is fortunately chimerical to any but the anarchist soul, and things will very likely not take this course; but Laveleye was stating here a supposition, and his conclusions from such premises were logical enough, and the whole passage is suggestive. A certain light falls upon it from the remark on the fact of the absence in England of a written constitution.

"This *régime*," he says, "which certainly has some advantages, is perhaps attended with no serious inconveniences so long as there reigns a respect for traditions and ancient laws. I think it perilous, however, in democratic epochs, where rules a taste for novelty, with the love of what is called progress."

Well, all these passages are interesting, although clearly they need to be less unreservedly expressed. But they represent Laveleye, I believe, in his most daring moods, at his critical strongest. He clearly felt that there is a certain insecurity, and I should be the last to affirm that he was wrong, inherent in

workable hypotheses. Consider for a little his chief attempt pointedly to formulate a really inclusive political induction true for all conditions, save probably in space of four dimensions, where the novelty of the surroundings could not in the least make up for the fresh harassing complications. His attempt results in this:—

*Equality of political rights and inequality in social conditions is the great peril of the modern democracies.*

This is so true an utterance that it deserves all the illustration that Laveleye gave it in his two large volumes. But, full of virtue as it is, it is almost his only divining-rod, and it is powerless to conjure the future. It is scarcely conceivable that any one could be more complete than he in the process of proving this admirable generalisation, on which undoubtedly hangs much of the law and the prophecy of "political science." Laveleye illuminates this idea; develops it; tentatively explodes it; giving every fact and critic hostile to him their turn, as is the true breeding of the really urbane writer of the Republic of Letters; demonstrates it with a cumulative force of argument that is convincing. Yet, among conclusions of great value this one is not so really important after all, for there is still that entire interesting series of other questions which, after this generalisation is accepted,

come crying to us all for an answer, but in which Laveleye will not try in the least to help us.

Granted the discovery of this rather beautiful but unsatisfying axiom, as vague in its suggestion as to the future as that other much admired one of Bishop Butler's about the present, that *things will be as they will be*, what nevertheless can it do for us? For this future, as I said, is immediately to be in many respects radically different from the past,—immediately, and that is the point. Take, for instance, the United States of North America, which has already begun to record its really exacting problems. Two centuries and a half in New England solved nothing. They demonstrated only what English piety and religion and the English sense of justice can accomplish when left to approximately uninterrupted development, without weeds of tradition or convention to choke them. But then the century began to change its character. Steam and electricity and the newspaper displayed an absolutely transforming activity. There especially, but in general and everywhere, it is becoming evident that between the man of the immediate future and the man of the corresponding quarter of even the latest century there is to be a much greater and more radical difference than between the man of the late last century and the man of, for instance,—one may really say this safely, without having been an

ancient, — old Rome or Carthage or Alexandria.[1] New emotions, new relations, new possibilities, new affections, new conditions in general, are arriving with such astounding rapidity that the world is even now almost a fresh one, and the past facts of history are becoming less and less applicable. "Political science," now nothing but a name, already demands the seer. And it is in the great recent nations, lying apart from the European and Asiatic network, that the new conditions can be best studied. But if all this is true, what remarkable force can there be in the axiom that "equality of political rights and inequality in social conditions is the great peril of modern democracies"? Yes, *equality of political rights and inequality in social conditions is the great peril of modern democracies.* But one thing that is certain is that equality of political rights is largely all but assured now throughout the world. To be the son of the even

[1] There is this difference between the present moment and that equally romantic awakening of the Renascence, namely, that the changes which human nature is now undergoing are, while perhaps not so obvious and striking in degree as then, yet so subtle and so fresh as to be almost radical. To-day it is human nature as a whole, men as mutually responsible members of a community, that is being altered; not merely this or that privileged mind thrilled with the new cry, "Back to Homer and the Gods and the Beautiful Christ Himself." See an important study on *Sébastien Castellion, sa Vie et son Œuvre* (1516–1563), by M. Ferdinand Buisson. Paris: Hachette.

immediate future is to be the heir of these equal political rights much of the world over. That this is not undoubtedly the drift there is left to us no chance of suspicion, and especially since the book of Laveleye. But out of this comes the important matter: *Will* this democratic future give birth to the distinctly distressing peril with which it seems big? Is there nothing to keep from the eyes of the high gods the monster that one can imagine will be produced by the union of the chaste Minerva of political rights and the hairy brutal Briareus of unequal social conditions? Are these two irreconcilable things, existing together, positively to produce so unexampled horror, whatever we may do, or whatever may be done? Are there no discernible causes tending to the ultimate extinction of, or else the taming of the savagery in, inequality of conditions? And if there are such causes, what are they, and when may we welcome them? Where lies the hope for the Democracy? We would like to know all about the new facts. It is possible, it seems to me, to discuss them much more bravely than Laveleye has done, and yet not lose one's head. Indeed, at this moment of time is it possible, without discussing them, to be scientific?

These, then, are some matters of pre-eminent importance in this vague field, in comparison to which all others are clearly of less interest. And to try to look

at such matters closely, at all events to answer such questions plausibly, though tentatively, would give a certain endurance to a piece of writing on these subjects. Laveleye, however, has not seriously touched them. Yet, although his scheme disappointingly does not admit of anxiety in such inquiry, how difficult it would be to make much of a list of other things which it does not contain. On "right," "justice," "liberty;" the forms of states and their development; the virtues and vices and tendencies inherent in each form; the "relation of state and church;" the question of "education;" of democracy seen through both ends of a telescope, and of all that can give it dignity or render it unstable; of combinations among classes; of the whole "electoral *régime*" and of parliaments,—what field or corner has he not traversed or ransacked, and always with plausibility when he tells us the result of his observations! At the start, especially in definition of the word "state," his analysis is very clear; and so much depends on nice analysis, on clear definition! But then in the midst of it all, when he says a thing like this, "However, progress in civilisation has been possible only by action on the part of the state," one wishes such analysis had stopped just short of it. Yet more fully and with more reserve he says, "To-day the mission of the state is no longer to force the citizen to submit to its ends, but to make laws which

allow the individual man to arrive, by his own efforts, at the whole joy of the fruit of his labour and the complete development of his faculties."

That Laveleye contradicts both of these utterances, in themselves to a large extent mutually contradictory, often throughout his discussion, arguing now for "individualism," and yet again being dead against it, simply because he is impatient and is rather eclectic than original, is not so much worth pointing out, however, as that in themselves the remarks just quoted are indefensible. It really is not true that "progress in civilisation has been possible only by action on the part of the state." Much depends, as I said, on clear definition. But here there can be no doubt whatever of the meaning of the word "state," namely, "the government," "the public powers." And how untrue, therefore, the sentence is! The "progress of civilisation" has gone on with the help of the occasionally happy and harmonious working of at least many other forces than those directed by governments or public powers,—by all the great forces of art and invention and commerce and discovery, and by an interminable list besides. This is a commonplace, and of course it was all clear enough to Laveleye; and yet he left such sentences as these in his manuscript. He would have condemned as quickly as a New Englishman the spirit of those great institutions which, established theoreti-

cally in the interests of "civilisation" (as a matter of fact how rarely they are!), do all they can to retard it, by insisting that they have engaged the entire time of their servants, as well as their ideas, their inventions, their brains. This, a widespread system in England and in France and in many another country,— does not Mr. Rudyard Kipling tell us how it exists in India?— is of course directly opposed to the "spirit of progress," but it is citable here because it illustrates the simple fact that advance in civilisation is possible even without action on the part of the state, and because it was not scientific in Laveleye thus to let it slip off his pen.

Indeed, there are good reasons why "state intervention" can never be a supreme ideal, vigorously as we all appear to be pushing to that ideal. For the state, as the word is used in that phrase, is, for the most part, only the active will of so much of the nation as exercises its powers, having attained various individual expression. Perhaps it ought to be the active will of only the best in the nation. If for any length of time the state fails to do the will of the active nation, it becomes to the nation odious, and things then tend towards tyranny; for the state may be said to be no longer "constitutional." Of course, therefore, tyranny can develop in a democracy almost as well as in a monarchy. The supremely ideal state, however, implies the supremely ideal nation; and in the supremely

ideal nation individual enlightenment and capacity would be so pervasive that any such activity on the part of the state as is defined by the common notion of the word "intervention"—namely, a kind of paternal and maternal assumption of responsibility, a dry-nursing of the community—would be unnecessary. In fact, the phrase would then mean nothing, inasmuch as the state, as a separate entity, being non-existent, being nothing but a name, the word "state" would be synonymous with the word "nation," and the government would exist simply as a frictionless machine absolutely competent to translate into action the entire thought of the community, and the whole community would be in *an-archy*, in heaven; dull and harpless, yet in heaven. But as the ideal condition does not now exist, any practical politics as well as "political science" is forced to deal with the real, the obvious state in the circumstances of its stunted development, and in the winter of its discontent; and as an historical fact of the past and the present, its great end, speaking generally, has been, and is, and really it appears to me should be, to maintain all the results of past achievements in general rights and privileges, by conservative insistence on the universally binding force of statute and constitutional law. This, its domestic, is ideally its chief, function. Of course in external relations it is like a ship's figure-head, it is the nation's ambassador.

But for the present, and at all events for the future, in the enlightened nation the chief moral characteristics, if one may speak thus figuratively, should be obedience and inertia. For the progress towards political right, towards complete abolition of exclusive privileges, towards art and towards science, towards all that makes up our slight civilisation, is not dependent and should not be dependent on the state, however much the state has it in its power to contribute to progress. It is the separate members of the nation who will, as human nature exists, care for this, and the state will go fast enough, in all conscience, if it simply reflect this advance, and recognise it only with the utmost caution. In a word, if there really be some place for everything, the state is the place for procrastination, conservatism, and irritating "red tape."

But undoubtedly now at this moment of awakening knowledge, when pretty nearly all men are becoming alert to needs of which they had not thought before, they will press more and more loudly in supplication to the state to relieve them quickly in their difficulties and to legislate in their behalf. If the demands are intelligent and widespread, and clearly in the interests of justice, the state may be said figuratively to have a duty to legislate in response. But is it not clear that this is not, properly speaking, "state intervention" at all? It is only the liking for the fair, the just, the

equal, with the hatred of privilege (which mark the advance of civilisation), being historically recorded; their attaining incarnation, as it were, in tangible forms. And it is not "state intervention" at all, save by a confusion of terms, or in the same way that a man may be said to *intervene* in the conduct of his own life when, having lived for a long time in one particular fashion, he decides, for this or that reason, to live in another and different way. So that while, as the years go on, henceforth the cry for this wonderful panacea will become louder and louder, yet, bustle henceforth as the state may and as it will, let no one be deceived. The state is not really "intervening," after all, but it is only reflecting, in most cases very incautiously, very bunglingly, very absurdly, the growingly expanding, complicated, life of communities, and showing thus very little knowledge of where its real virtue lies, namely, in obedience and inertia.

Now, Laveleye sees, with Dupont-White, how rapidly, all about the planet, "intervention" is growing to be an alluring idea,—one thinks of the cigarettes of Rhode Island, and one sees that this is so; how English and American legislation in particular have shown what, from the point of view of the Saxon traditions as to the almost divine right of the individual man, is regarded in many minds as really an astounding change. But as to why all this is taking place he is

not very clear, and the real nature of the change he makes no attempt to define.

But it is a pleasure after these evidences of impatience, of lack of compactness, to remember how safe and satisfying Laveleye was capable of being. In the chapters on the parliamentary *régime* and its vices in this latest book, he is not only quite at his best, but he is at a very good point of value indeed. He is not only clear, — he was always that, — but he is critical and he is informing. Here his immensely impressive acquaintance with the large class of books and documents containing the indispensable mass of political facts that are American, sources very little known in England, on the Continent scarcely known at all, stood him in good stead. Enamoured particularly of the constitutional monarchy when it works at its most frictionless best, as he thought under the Leopolds of Belgium,— though all that appears to me the happiest of accidents, — he still depicts with a lucidity and a completeness that show his admiration for quite another governmental form, many advantages attending the working of the constitution of the United States in North America; and in general he compares the North American system with the English with real penetration and knowledge. But here again at the threshold of the interesting problems he laid down his pen. There are many things here that seem to have

escaped him. He says there are to be dangers in the future, more even than exist at present. That, however, he told us in his formula about "equal rights" and "unequal social conditions," so that the warning is not very impressive. Yet there are also two luminous passages like these: —

"The natural limits of a democratic republic were in the old days the walls of a city. To-day the book, the newspaper, the telegraph, bring to all, at the same moment, the same impression, and extend the circle of the agora to the frontiers of a language and the limits of a continent. Thus one of the great obstacles to the establishment of republics is done away with *by the mere progress in technical inventions*.[1] . . . For more than two hundred years we have been seeing in New England societies freely governing themselves, by electing all authorities without exception, political, administrative, judiciary, ecclesiastical, without having any necessity of a king's intervention in their streets, or of a pope's in their consciences. . . . In order that the same *régime* should be established and maintained in Europe, it would be enough for the European peoples in all classes of society to acquire illumination as sane, a good sense as solid, a religion as reasonable, as the inhabitants of New England. We are, alas! far from that condition, and no one can tell when we shall reach it, for we do not suspect even the distance that separates us; but who would dare say that the goal will never be reached?"

Ah, here were the timely cues! Why were they not followed? Yet Laveleye was a wise man, and

[1] The italics are mine.

perhaps here his silence was wisdom. The way is so very difficult that it is only for the surest-footed. Who of us has the courage to enter upon it? Who thinks himself strong enough to venture the saying of the enduring thing upon so vast a theme?

Yet there are reasons why it is worth while to have notions on this question, vast and all but presumptuous as it is. I may say frankly that I see but two solutions, and that one of them, while popular and possible in scholastic argument, seems to me highly improbable as the one likely to be evolved by events. This solution is a return to the ages of faith.

Upon what painful moments have we happened! The assurances, the attachments, which made life tolerable for the classes at the bottom of the social organism; the consolations and illusions of religious devotion making natural for members of these classes the spirit of martyrdom; the quiet moods leading to endurance of privation and of suffering, and sought for even by the devout poor in the hope of the far-off joys of "heaven," when the time should come for "the last to be first," and for the great "reversal of human judgments" to be an accomplished fact, — all these causes of peace and conservatism are vanishing from the earth; and louder and louder, echoing about the planet, rise the cries of the people who suffer; the indignant bursts of men too long repressed, and now

with their opening thought demanding, fist in air, a share in the fruits of the common activity. So long as men believe in a God of compensation; so long as no one can say them nay when they affirm that they catch his whispers in their ear, bidding them bide their time; so long as men believe that in their "Father's house are many mansions," and that one day a freehold will be theirs, with milk and cheese and gardens for their children, and the sky of summer over them for ever; so long as mothers know in their heart of hearts that sorrow is God's will, and that in the end, after the trials of this "Vale of Tears," they shall "see Him face to face," and hear His voice bidding them enter, "good and faithful servants, into the joy of their Lord," — so long will they work their fingers to the bone, wearing always on their face the beatific smile; so long will the "Song of the Shirt" be really a pæan of rejoicing; so long will the factory bell, tolling in the grey of the early morning, announce for them the dawning of a day bringing them, whatever its miseries, nearer to the Gates of Pearl; and so long will there be a quiet earth.

But what a moment for them, what a moment for us, when these dreams are gone! What then? Tragedy of tragedies for us all. Woe to their fellows when men wake to the truth that they have been dupes! For they will no longer suffer and be still. Then let

society look to its libraries and museums, and the courtesan of the great cities to her lap-dog and her violet powder.

"Un certain ressort caché,
Tout à coup étant lâché,
Fait tomber, ber ber,
Fait sauter, ter ter,
Fait tomber,
Fait sauter,
Fait voler la tête.
C'est vraiment honnête!"

And it is to this sort of awakening that we have all but come again to-day. In my ears while I write are the *ping, ping* of the pistols, and the louder explosion of the guns, on the river bank at Homestead in the State founded by the man of the peaceful name of Penn. So that one is all but inclined to say, with M. Renan: "I cannot conceive how, without the old dreams, ever can be rebuilt the foundations of a noble and a happy life."

Yes, depend upon it, this pessimistic view of civilisation, but for one thing, is exact. The particular "noble and the happy life" of the past, of the disintegrating present even, it is clear enough, will not return. For the "old dreams," as truly as have gone the soaring harmonies of the Pindaric song, are vanishing from the world. And instead is the sound in every country of this planet of the army of Democracy,

each soldier beating time before the triumphant march with fresh flags and symbols at his head. The Huns and Vandals of the Middle Age are only the rudest symbol of such an army. By systems of barbaric "protection" the states think for the moment to erect their dikes against the international tide. But down before this tide state and Chinese wall of tariff must inevitably go, and after them all else be swept away, — *but for one thing,* — in the common destruction. But what is this check, this solution, of our crisis? It seems to me to inhere in the activity of forces, the dignity of which it is the mode to-day to question; in the good, side by side with the dangerous, in that great *laic* movement of the growing time known vaguely as the "modern spirit."

*Laic?* But the word is French rather than English; and as yet, in communities of people who speak English, the term has no force, because no vogue. On the continent of Europe, however, *laic* has for a long time now been growing in familiarity as a name for all the impulses that mark the temper of persons resentful of authority; it is less exact to say, but briefer and more intelligible, a name for all the impulses of the "people." Science has not to approve or condemn the thing thus named. Its sole business is to draw attention to the fact. And while, therefore, I do not venture to record a personal opinion as to the value of

this spirit, I may nevertheless recall its existence. For of that there is no question. A fresh spirit is growing on our planet, growing in those portions of it known as England and the United States in North America, and is already widely extended among the older "Latin nations," — a spirit which, having at first its origin in a feeling of reaction against ecclesiastical authority alone, is rapidly broadening so as to include in it the entire series of feelings of suspicion of all authority whatsoever, of dislike of whatsoever institutions and compact monopolizing organisms; and it is this feeling, binding together the "people" in every country east and west, which deserves a name, and which, in want of a better, I have called laic. It is the laic spirit which is transforming society, to which Authority is now throwing its bribes, which is demanding to-day socialistic solutions for the ills which it suffers, and with which pre-eminently the scientist and the philosopher in these fields have now to deal. And the practical question is, what, if the contented and the happy life is not to be secured by a revival of the old faiths, what will preserve to us the ancient tranquillity, and the progress of a quiet evolution; for without the action of this unknown cause we shall be exposed to a dreadful *revolution*, which the quickly expanding laic spirit indubitably threatens.

A paragraph in M. de Cassagnac's newspaper, *L'Autorité*, recently caught my eye: "On mounting

the scaffold, Ravachol's last cry was, *Vive la République.* It was a cry from the heart. The Republic having produced Ravachol, he, in dying, salutes his mother. This good-by of his proves that Ravachol was still better than his mother." I do not call special attention to the miserable helplessness of mood, like that of a chained dog who snarls, betrayed in unpatriotic utterance like this, which implies that the present *régime* in France is responsible for the anarchist ideal; as well might a citizen of the United States of North America accuse Thomas Jefferson or Alexander Hamilton of being the authors of the monstrous episode of rioting at Mr. Carnegie's workshops in Pennsylvania. The noteworthy observation seems to me to be of quite another sort; it is that this painful, this ridiculous commentary on the career of the most redoubtable of modern anarchists has in it so much of truth, at all events so much of plausibility, that, when given the immense publicity of the penny journal, it is sure to produce a baneful effect on uninstructed minds in propagation of that very worst in our civilisation which it is to be the privilege of the contemporaneous best to check. For it is not enough to say that the French Republic produced Ravachol; it is not to speak very much of the truth to say that the Republic of the United States of North America caused the Homestead riots; it is not particularly far-

seeing to fix upon the English Democracy as responsible for the Irish "Plan of Campaign." The causes of these curious phenomena are not thus hunted to their origin and named. The causes are more remote, and are co-extensive with our time and place. Behind the French Republic, and the political compact of the United States, and the notions in the minds of the originators of the "Plan of Campaign," and behind, for instance, the decentralising activity now making itself felt in the Scandinavian peninsula; behind, indeed, every impulse of individual thought the world over, are as causes — and we need go no farther in our search — the immensely surprising results of mechanical invention in the application of scientific discovery, the entire series of ingenious achievements and devices, the combined action of which is towards the unity of the human race, the lessening of distance, the destruction of time, — facts which give to any special moment here on this planet a distinction among hitherto recorded eras which is absolutely unique and overwhelmingly impressive, as much in its obvious suggestions as to the future of the progress of civilisation on Planet No. 3 of this astronomic system as in its absorbing interest in the interpretation of the present; facts, moreover, — and this is the fascinating paradox, — that, in the words of M. de Cassagnac's paper, are indeed the mother of the Ravachols, of anarchy and of revo-

lution and of every one of those social dangers which render doubtful the happy issue of civilisation; but facts which will in the end themselves be saving, for they carry within themselves as much of peace as of war, as much of balm as of irritant.

It is really not surprising, however, that it is necessary to insist on this paradox; to point out the obvious ameliorations inherent in the material accomplishments of our extraordinary century. This necessity arises from the baneful influence, in this connection, of the two great conservative and most widely efficient forces of the world,— the forces of literature [1] and of religion.

[1] It is partially, perhaps to a large degree, by literature that fresh thought gets itself expressed. And the writings generally recognized as valuable, to which we have given the name *classic*, could not at their appearance, in any proper use of language, be called a force conservative. But the large literary impulse for the late four hundred years has been always in obedience to some more or less admirable Authority. Men have taken sides; they have formed "schools;" they have been followers of Homer or of Hesiod, "Romanticists," "Idealists," or "Realists;" they have written short guides, which they have called rhetorics, to the "classics;" in general they have loved the idea of the guild, liked uniformity, dealt with the past, and suppressed the new. This may or may not have been wise, it is certain not to be the way of the future. Up to our moment most literature, apart from that of genius, has been conservative. All this the laic time is irremediably changing, and the *classical* note will one day be as undistinguished as the parochial or provincial note is now.

Religion is necessarily a conservative force. And although a far view across the centuries in search of the religious ideals of men reveals as these ideals an immense variety of affections, a host of allegiances having so little in common that the entire human attempt towards religion must be admitted to have only a relative value, yet the famous historical results of all these impulses, whether they be rude or elaborated, whether they be conceptions formed in the Gulf of Benin or on the banks of the Jordan, have for science this bond of union: they are all sincere endeavours to put order into the mind, and they have had their historical authority just in proportion to their success in ordering the mind, that is, in proportion to the plausibility of their appeal. The common lot of thinking beings is sure to appear to them so mysterious, the human condition is so appallingly incomprehensible, that men obey an imperious passion in seeking to solve it, and the emotion with which they cling to the solutions, to their philosophy of things, is a religious emotion, valuable in proportion to its individual quality. But for polities the individual quality is only a misfortune; for polities it is highly important that the religious passion should be as much as possible of the same sort among all the members of the community; and the principle of Authority will therefore always be cultivated by wise

statesmen, whose chief duty it appears to me is to retard our progress to the utmost. As a conservative force, therefore, the present dominant religion of the two Americas and of Europe, Christianity, will always be more than respectfully treated by wise politicians; reciprocal esteem and support are clearly to the advantage of both forces; such collusion is in the interest of the peaceful life of communities.

But those who have the interests of Christianity most at heart, when they see it losing some of its hold to-day, seek to base its authority anew; and in this fresh activity the critic beholds a curious thing. He assists at an essential alteration in the very philosophy of this religion, a change which is one of the most remarkable of contemporary movements. Christianity, however illogical historically its conduct may often have been, ought always to have taught complete rejection of the world. Its honest feeling about this world has been one of uncompromising pessimism. It has gone out into the world with the cry of John the Baptist: *Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.* But its most fascinating paradox has always been that one may be in the world, yet not of it. It has sought the world forever, but only to save it in view of another. To-day what do we see? We are beholding a curious and a radical change. We see Christianity entering the world with a passion for

its amelioration for its own sake, and this implies a sense that the world is for its own sake worthy of attention. The Christian passion is really becoming political in a new and striking way. Christianity no longer visages men as doomed and lost. In Christianity's view to-day the passengers on this floating island need no longer be trained to the discipline of the life-boat, and taught the use of the patent life-belts, for a prospective shipwreck on the morrow. Quite another idea has entered the officers' minds, and is making itself felt in the ship's discipline. The idea which is in the air, and about which the ship's crew are whispering on and off the watch, is merely this, that the voyage is sure to be longer than any one aboard had once supposed. Meanwhile, let the decks be scrubbed, the brass fittings be made to shine, the sails furled more trimly, and under the stars let occasional dance and song beguile the hours. While we voyage let us have discipline, but let us be as happy as we can. Better, any day, than the mermaids of our morbid love, when we welcomed the end, and hated the sea-brine, and cursed our mother the Earth and our father the Sun, is adoration of them both, and the breezy life afloat.

Such is the nature of the interesting change. But the idea of rejection of the world, which has been the persistent watchword of the idealistic, the uncompromisingly pessimistic, though in the main the utterly

unimaginative religion of the West, has resulted in loud and ridiculous talk in the disparagement of our century — the century, as I said, of uniquely impressive achievements — as a time of materialism to be lamented, of money-getting to be disparaged, as a moment of low ideals meriting the anathema of the traditional clergy, the pathetic but melodious censure of the fastidious critic of art, and the curious inquiry of poets, anxious for the prestige of their pretty fancies run into borrowed moulds of measure, as to whether science and the fresh time are to lessen the value of their academic palms. This absurd conservative cant of religion and of literature has been on the lips even of men of genius. It has resulted in unutterable scorns and in prodigious snobbish assumptions which are ridiculous, and in the relegation, I may add, by much of European culture of the community of the North American Republic to an outer darkness of uneducated ideals, to a noisy land full of the distracting hum of a great "material" life, and ignorant of the "things of the spirit."

*Material! Things of the spirit!*

But in what hierarchy, pray, of ideals are these two words to be thus employed, in unwise opposition, to the glory of the one and the abasement of the other? An effective indication of the essential want of imagination in the really English mind is the inflexi-

bility of its literary formulas; its persistent regard for idioms and moulds of thought; its inability to name things accurately, which is the only way to secure freshness and even distinction, such distinction as much of even the least conspicuous of French literature achieves to-day; its assumption that the intensely unusual is in itself unwarrantable license, instead of being, as often, the scientific naming of not much noticed, but after all familiar things. This contrast between "material" and "things of the spirit" is an illustration of this habit of using blurred phraseology. But whereas the conservative religious forces may be said to have an excuse — at all events they may be pardoned — for propagating so deceptive an error as this contrast preserves, literature has none. Literature, criticism, are bound to be less shackled. They should point out that the material activities of our moment, those activities which we mean when we talk of the progress of thought directed to money-getting, to railroad-making, to application of electricity in torpedo, in flying-machine or theatrophone, to the establishment of journal or of school, in general to the development of all the means of intercommunication, which bring to the uneducated the spurs and opportunities of thought, are the very causes which are changing the lethargy of the Philistine into the troublesome curiosity of our aroused and democratic

earth. I have no fear that that absorption of us all by the Philistines which Matthew Arnold once anticipated with pain will ever come to pass. One feels somewhat sorry that it will not, however, for the reign of the Philistines would be sure to be a reign of comparative peace, of evolution, at least, instead of the revolution that we all have so much reason to dread. No, of that there is no danger — or no hope. The social evolution of the world is now moving much too rapidly. Its progress is in another direction. It extinguishes the spark of life in dodoes; and the Philistine, more and more left behind, among obstreperous but thinking people, may one day claim as his last distinction the preservation of his somewhat battered, but essentially unchanged, type, appreciable only as a survival of a less interesting time. Yet, as I said, with enough Philistinism tempered by the devout Christianity of "faith," we might preserve forever the contented and the happy life with all the somewhat dull *éclat* of our admired ancestors. So, if we cannot any longer count on the old faith nor on a Philistinism submitting to be leavened, where is our hope? What kind of solution is left to us?

The answer to this question is the sort of thing with which any "political science" hoping to claim our serious attention, or to deserve its name, is bound to deal; but upon which Laveleye, perhaps in his

discreet way, at all events to the diminution of the importance of his book, refused to enter. His admirable axiom about equality in political rights and inequality in social conditions indicated, as I said, clearly enough the danger; but there he left us without a clue. And yet we see every day about us a greater and greater gulf yawning ominously between present reality and aspiration. We have approximately to-day over the western countries of the earth equality in political rights, but we have apparently more and more inequality in social conditions. The lowest strata of the human community are clearly far better off, from an absolute point of view, than they were in the ages called Middle. But relatively they are not. At all events they think that they are not. The French Revolution has gone, with its loud pretensions. But it has left behind it a great illusion, and *liberté*, *égalité*, *fraternité*, are hollow mockeries in the ears of the unprivileged, or the less privileged, everywhere. M. Max Nordau says, in his *Les Mensonges Conventionnels de la Civilisation*, "Equality is a chimera hatched by the *savant* at his desk, or by dreamers who have never observed with their own eyes nature and humanity. . . . It is a fable which has no further place in a rational exegesis, . . . and which no longer figures on any democratic programme save that of a beer-garden."

Well, all this one will not hesitate to admit, but it is just in this admission that I find the only possible premise of further thought. For the gigantic exertions devoted by men to the search for equality, whether it be in revolt of Spartan helot, or of Roman slave, or of meddlesome bourgeois, or of English colonist, or as to-day is instanced everywhere in the rise of socialism, are always the indications of the effect of those educative awakening laic forces which we find supremely at our moment so widely extending, so impossible to overlook. But just so pervasive is this laic movement in our time that we are bound to note the immensity of its cause; and when we have noted it, not to forget that this cause cannot henceforward be excluded as it could be at a time when there were no penny-posts, no Atlantic or Pacific cables, no newspapers, no free schools, no railways, no telephones. And these causes of the laic unrest, these powers which are creating a fresh man in a new earth, which, in teaching all men to think and generalise, are making their condition of indigence more sensible to them, are so steadily being multiplied that, instead of having seen the end of a slight and merely impudent insurrection against established order, we are assisting at what is only the opening of a most unpleasant burst of individuality; and this movement will go on unceasingly, with all its troublesome vulgarities, and with increasing roar as

with the sound of a whirlwind, until the rich man and the scholar, not knowing, with all their coins and learning, how to bribe or crush the laic mob, shall draw up their garments about them, intrench themselves in their country-houses and cabinets, and watch the vain and light fellows of the new time sowing with salt their fields and gardens.

And salt they will sow, depend upon it, for they are not Philistines, and are not very religious, unless the inequality which they are learning to resent in social conditions be quickly annihilated. Science is upsetting the world. It has now to reorganise it. It has been experimenting almost beyond human tolerance. The chief mark of science would seem to be irony, which M. Renan calls the consolation of the just. Has it been trying to see how far it can go, and will it turn back at the "nick-of-time"? For now it would seem to be taking away all the props of the social structure with a kind of diabolic serenity, only to watch it tumble, crashing to the ground. It might have left us "respectable," all of us easy-going Philistines and backbiting Christians, but it willed not. It taught religion how to utilise its piety; it furnished instruments to philanthropy while we applauded: but all along its secret plan apparently was only to draw the attention of the succoured to their woes. It engaged Englishmen in India to model a

state on well-tried systems of education and on civic discipline, to teach the natives the rules of self-government, and it is doing the same in Egypt to-day, and to-morrow it may do the same in Morocco; but all the time it has concealed the malevolence of its real intention, — the creation of an unruly, irreconcilable public opinion, destined one day to deny its parents, like the thankless child of the proverb. It has patted on the back the generous man, enforced by religion; acquiesced in the delusions of a pope when he celebrates a Columbus as the discoverer of a new world for the Church; and furnished philanthropic arguments to the utterly mercenary founders of the great colonial companies of the world; and always and ever its sole object has been to lead us on to the very brink of destruction, and meanwhile, when at this brink, to erect the coquettish buildings of a vast *fin de siècle* fair,[1] decked in streamers, where ideas are sold as trinkets, and theories hawked to enticing cry for phenomenal cheap prices. And here we all are, with chuckling science looking on. In truth, science has a pretty wit.

Ah, yes, but we have not done with science yet. It is science, and science only, that is to find for us the solution to the great question. Science has made America and Australia, in comparison with the stand-

[1] Cf. La Foire aux Idées, of M. Henri de Saussine. 1892.

ards of older communities, vulgar; it is working a similar change in England. But in the end science is to solve its problem by consistent application of the same series of causes as hitherto have filled us with dismay. The only hope for Democracy is that the inequality of conditions shall be approximately so quickly done away that a feeling of reasonable satisfaction shall bring temporary tranquillity to the restless aspiration of the new laic men. Compare what the race has accomplished in the late seventy years with what it had attained in ten thousand years before, and the plausibility of this solution will be irrefutably pressing. But scientific development must advance, not only rapidly, it must go with a prodigious speed. If it does not, it will not order the world. If it does not, our civilisation, which in any case is to be utterly transformed, will be changed by revolution. Science must learn to respond to the myriad awakened, awakening wants, almost as soon as they are felt. And that it will do this is the only hope now left to us.

Yes, our romantic moment, called by the theologians material, by the rhymers prosaic, by the æsthetes vulgar, is but the noisy close of a somewhat too long overture in the great opera of our common progress,—a prelude marked in its earlier portions by naïve passages of delicious melody, later on by symphonic movements stern and simple, with frequent lyric bursts into a

larger air, and at the close by a superb but often inharmonious mingling of melody and musical comment, shot by *leit-motiv* after *leit-motiv* of the first scenes of the opera to come. But although this overture which we have learned to love we ourselves cannot soon forget, the audience of the next centuries will turn upon it a more scientific ear. They surely will be amused at the illusion held by many of us that our much-admired overture was all. But not even their lot is so wonderfully wider. We have no real cause for jealousy. For when one thinks of Algol, the wandering thought makes nothing of us all.

Whether this be consolation is another matter.

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